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THE

PROGRESS

OF

BAPTIST PRINCIPLES

IN

THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS.

BY

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PREFACE.

THIS volume might almost be called "Concessions of Pedobaptists as to the Errors of Infant Baptism, and the Importance of Baptist Principles." The aim of the writer has chiefly been to arrange these authorities, and point out the consequences of their admissions. He has for a few years occasionally noted down some of the more striking of these acknowledgments, as he has casually met with them in the course of his theological reading. Each year these have become more distinct and decisive, when fairly put together, so that no system of Pedobaptism can now be produced consistent with itself. A body of concessions so complete and overwhelming at every point, could not be brought forward in regard to any other practice yet maintained by such large bodies of excellent Christians as still uphold infant baptism.

It would have been easy to double the number of these admissions, and the authorities adduced on every point. Indeed the recollection of most students will at each step suggest several important additional testimonies of a similar kind. The object of the author

has been to select none but what were easily accessible, and are, or ought to be, well known to every impartial thinker. To the writer they appear as decisive as testimony can be in regard to any thing.

If, in a single line of the following pages, there should appear to the reader the slightest unkind allusion to any other denomination or individual, the writer would at once say that nothing has been further from his intentions or his feelings. For his Christian brethren of different denominations he has ever cherished the most fraternal regard, and wishes increasingly to promote every thing that may tend to cultivate and strengthen this sentiment. But he is persuaded that this is not to be done by diminishing denominational attachments, or the closeness of Church ties—not by an increase of *laxity*, but of *love*.

His aim has been to draw a wide distinction between parties and opinions. Hence the object of this volume is not to exhibit or defend the Baptists, but their principles. So, on the other hand, the author has not intentionally made an unkind allusion to any Pedobaptist denomination, or a single person, while conscientiously maintaining an opposite system.

PHILADELPHIA, September 1, 1855.

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INTRODUCTION.

By many persons, Baptists, are supposed to differ from other evangelical Christians merely in relation to two points of a single rite—the *form* and *time* of baptism. Hence, even where believed to be correct in their opinions, they are supposed to be wrong in spirit, lacking in charity, building up a sect upon a ceremony, and making every other Christian "an offender for a word."

Those who have fairly examined their history, however, will have observed that they have uniformly maintained a body of principles of which their baptism has been merely the appointed symbol. Some of these they have held alone, and others frequently in common with Christians of different denominations.

The present work is intended to trace out *the progress of Baptist principles during the last hundred years, their coherence and consistency.*

These principles may be divided into three classes.

I. Those which have been by degrees conceded in theory by many of the most enlightened of other denominations.

II. Those which form the remaining points still controverted.

III. Those which, though always held in common by evangelical Christians, require the acknowledgment of Baptist principles, to be advocated with due force and consistency.

BOOK I.

CONCEDED PRINCIPLES.

MANY of the most important facts and principles asserted by the Baptists, have, within the last hundred years, by degrees been fully conceded in theory by several of the wisest and best of other denominations.

These will be found to form such a basis of concessions as to leave it impossible that opposite principles should long survive among enlightened evangelical Christians. They embrace,

1. Freedom of Conscience, and the entire separation of Church and State.
2. A Converted Church Membership.
3. Sacraments inoperative without Choice and Faith.
4. Believers the only Scriptural Subjects of Baptism.
5. Immersion always the Baptism of the New Testament.

CHAPTER I.

OPENING REMARKS.

A PEDOBAPTIST gentleman in Philadelphia has for some years been making a collection of all works on the Baptismal Controversy. He has already obtained more than four-

teen hundred volumes in the English language alone, which he proposes to arrange chronologically, and to present to the library of Princeton Theological Seminary. In examining this collection, two things are specially noticeable: that this controversy has of late years been conducted in a far more Christian spirit, and that the points of difference are greatly narrowed down.

Two hundred years ago, when Dr. Featley published his "Dippers Dipped, or the Anabaptists Ducked and Plunged Head over Ears," the opponents of Baptist views complained on exactly the opposite grounds from what they do now, regarding them as so radically different that they could not safely be even tolerated. There seemed to them something that cut at the root of all Christianity, in contending for liberty of conscience, denying baptism to infants, and calling in question the utility of a vicarious faith by sponsors and parents. Fines, fetters, and banishment alone appeared the suitable reward for such opinions. Now, on the contrary, it is the chief complaint of evangelical Pedobaptists that the difference is so unimportant as not to justify Baptists in maintaining their peculiarities as a distinct denomination. A great change has taken place among Protestants generally, and evangelical Protestants especially. Time has killed many of their errors, and more of their prejudices. No one knows where they have gone, or how they have evaporated. Chevalier Bunsen,[1] for instance, "does not see for what good internal reason the Baptists, as such, can be excluded from a National Church. Those who give a preference to adult baptism * * * should no more be looked upon as heretics on that account than Baptists on their part should stigmatize by that name such congrega-

[1] Hippolytus, vol iii. p. 215.

tions as have a preference for infant baptism." Disbelieving in a National Church, Baptists may not be able to see the advantage of suddenly doing away distinctions that have so long been matters of historical fact and growth; but they earnestly desire to see all those who love the Saviour united in heart, and loving each other as fellow-heirs of eternal life.

The degree to which the points of this controversy have narrowed down is still more remarkable. It has only been by slow stages that those evangelical truths which were the essence of the Reformation, however sincerely held by a few of the more prominent Reformers, penetrated into the religious life of the masses, or have been carried out to their legitimate results. In many cases there was at first but a chaos of confused principles. Often where the heart was evangelical, many of the remains of Popery hung about it, as a fog will linger on the surface of the waters, while at a little elevation all is clear. It may not impede the current or the tide, or the motion of the vessels borne upon the surface, but prevents the navigators from seeing where they are going, or pursuing an undeviating course with certainty and safety. The clearness and consistency of Baptist principles have enabled those who have held them to penetrate these vapors with precision and ease, as a ship guided by a well-adjusted compass sails through a mist at sea. But then the directness with which they have advanced to their point has seemed to others not only dangerous to them, but to all around. By degrees these fogs have been clearing away. Vast multitudes of the most pious men of the age, many of them Pedobaptists in name, have become what Dr. Bushnell calls "Baptists in theory," to such an extent that they ought, as he admits, in all consistency to become

so in practice. A careful examination will fully show that there is a series of principles of which the Baptist denomination alone has been the consistent and uniform advocate; principles of the utmost importance to vital religion, and now admitted and contended for by none more strenuously than those who have most opposed this denomination in name. There is nothing which will be more likely to surprise the student of the ecclesiastical history of this country, than to notice that many of the points which were in dispute a hundred years ago, and which were originally regarded as Baptist peculiarities, have become established principles of the great unwritten creed—the general religious sentiment of the whole country—the common law, so to speak, of American Christianity. It is probable that when some of them are named, the only astonishment and difficulty with many readers will be to realize that these things ever were disputed or even doubted. As a first illustration of this, we may name *Freedom of Conscience.*

CHAPTER II.

FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE, AND THE PERFECT SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

Two points which, superficially viewed, may seem distinct, are here connected together, because they will be found to resolve themselves essentially into one great principle. The utmost distinction is, that the union of Church and State puts a premium upon one form of religion, while all other opposition to freedom of conscience places a penalty upon another. But as in the former case the Church which is

established receives a premium from the dissenter, its union with the State involves, in fact, a stigma, a penalty on all other forms of worship, and this being compulsory, is persecution. Freedom of conscience can not be fully and fairly predicated where any penalty is attached to its exercise.

Of the millions of all denominations in this country, who now enjoy so perfectly as we do the inestimable blessing of religious liberty, and of all those who throughout Europe and the world are advocating it in various degrees, few are aware how much they are indebted for these views and enjoyments to the Baptists; fewer still know that this indebtedness, such as it is, is not mere accident, but a necessary consequence of their distinctive peculiarities as a denomination. They may probably have learned from Bancroft that Roger Williams was the first Christian legislator who introduced perfect religious liberty into the constitution of any State, but are not aware, perhaps, that these views were advocated publicly in London by the Baptists, with great zeal, a few years before he came to this country. Or if prepared to go so far, they are probably ignorant that the advocacy of this spiritual freedom is to be traced in connection with Baptist sentiments, long before the time of Luther, among the Waldenses, and through such men as Arnold of Brescia, Peter de Bruis, and the Henricians, back probably to the Donatists, and the time of Constantine the Great.

Before, then, commencing to trace the progress of these views during the past century, it will be necessary in this instance to give a rapid sketch of their previous history, in order to show how far they may be fairly and justly claimed as distinctively Baptist principles.

§ I. Early Development of the Principle of Religious Liberty.

Previous to about the time of Constantine, there could, of course, be no controversy on this subject. The Greeks and Romans, though generally tolerant of the religion of others, and not attempting to change the faith of any conquered State, never doubted the right of government to interfere, or the wisdom of the exercise of this right on occasions. Thus Socrates was condemned to the cup of hemlock, on the charge of alienating the minds of the young from the religion of the State, and it is painful to note the indifference with which the mild and philosophic Pliny writes to the Emperor Trajan of the cruel and extensive punishments he thought proper to inflict upon the "harmless" early Christians. Until the time of the first so-called Christian emperor, therefore, these men were often persecuted, but never had possessed the power of the State on their side, either for persecution or for patronage. But no sooner was Christianity the religion of the State, and its powers employed in crushing the Donatists, than the rights of conscience were asserted by the oppressed minority with great eloquence and power. In this respect, Neander considers it "the most important and influential Church division of this period." "That which distinguishes the present case is," he says, "the reaction proceeding out of the essence of the Christian Church against the confounding of the ecclesiastical and political elements, on which occasion, for the first time, the ideas which Christianity, as opposed to the pagan religion of the State, had first made men distinctly conscious of, became an object of contention within the State itself, *the ideas concerning universal inalienable human*

rights, concerning liberty of conscience, concerning the rights of free religious conviction."[1]

The election of a church officer was the accidental occasion of this rupture. But when the emperor compelled "another more important matter, the employment of force in matters of religion" evoked a spirit long existing, and a zeal that force could not subdue. "Christ persecutes no one; he was for inviting, not forcing men to the faith. Why do you not permit every man to follow his own free will? Christ in dying for men has given Christians the example to die, but not to kill." Such was the language of the Donatist bishop, Petilian. The Catholics, on the other hand, with Augustine at their head, argued that "men were authorized and bound to employ force," and compel men to enter the visible Church, from Luke xiv. 23.

Such was the commencement of a controversy continued to this day. In many of the incidental circumstances of the quarrel, the Donatists may have been wrong, and were wrong, because they were but men, but in the great principles which remained with them, of opposition to the Catholics sweeping the world into the Church,[2] and compelling the consciences of men, they were right, and the means of exhibiting an important part of Christian truth and Church life.

God chooses his people in the fires of affliction, and he purifies them there. These Donatists, joined gradually by other sects who broke off from the Catholics in search of a purer faith, seemed to have formed the germ of the Waldenses. This alone accounts for the tradition ever faithfully maintained by them and acknowledged by their enemies,

[1] History of the Christian Religion and Church, vol. ii. p. 182–217. Torrey.

[2] Neander, vol. ii. p. 205, 6.

that they had maintained a distinct existence from the time of Pope Sylvester, the time when, under Constantine, the union between Church and State was completely effected. Neander considers this "the true historical origin of the sect" of the Waldenses,[1] and there is every reason to feel assured of the truth of this opinion. It was universally acknowledged among them. Reinerius Saccho, who had the best means of knowing, having been for seventeen years one of them, but not writing until he became a Catholic Inquisitor, A.D. 1250, states this fact, and adds that their universal extension and high antiquity make them the most dangerous enemies of the Catholic Church.

There is still extant among the remains left by these most ancient Protestants, a Treatise on Antichrist, which is an authentic exposition of their faith. It is generally considered to have been written about A.D. 1120, but Neander thinks it may have been much older.[2] It thus describes Antichrist: "He arrived at maturity when men whose hearts were set upon the world multiplied in the Church, and *by the union of Church and State got the power of both into their hands.* * * * * He teaches to baptize children into the faith, and attributes to this the work of regeneration, thus confounding the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration with the external rite of baptism, and on this foundation bestows orders, and indeed grounds all his Christianity."[3]

The reactionary spirit against the corruptions of the State Church, appears in this extract to have given clearness to

[1] Church History, vol. iv. p. 605, and notes. [2] Vol. iv. p. 605.

[3] Jones' Church History, p. 338, whose quotations I have followed, he having gone over the whole ground carefully, with Wall and Perrin before him.

the pious authors of this Treatise. It is the benefit which the presence of error occasions to the Church, that it produces in contrast a faith more sharply defined, exact, and clear. When the Donatists first broke loose from the Catholics, they saw the corruption of their opponents to such a degree that they re-baptized all who came over to them from the Romish party. But they did not then define and trace out so clearly the origin and principles of Romish errors, as after long observation. At the time when the Donatist secession finally and fully seems to have occurred, the time of Sylvester, about A.D. 330, and for one hundred and fifty years after, infant baptism according to Neander, "*entered rarely and with difficulty into the life of the Church.*" It had not become the universal or even the usual practice.[1]

On this account at first there is little distinction recorded between the Catholics and the Donatists in regard to this point. The latter were soon known universally as Anabaptists in the views of their opponents, because they denied the validity of the Catholic baptism, and repeated it, generally, adhering to a primitive exclusiveness in its administration.[2] The repetition was on account of the general worldliness and corruption of that Church, but specific attention had not then been turned to many of the errors in detail. It is even probable that individual cases of infant baptism may have existed among the earlier Donatists. But the Christian consciousness of a Divine life awakened within, tended always to the purity of the Church, operating with a reactive force against the errors of the Catholics, and must have prevented this error from spreading far, while it eventually woke up against them many an indignant re-

[1] Vol. ii. p. 319. [2] Hase's Church History, sec. 142.

monstrance like the above from the Treatise on Antichrist.

From this time forward we shall find, in connection with the warmest defenses of liberty of conscience, the most solemn protests against infant baptism. The Petrobrussians (A.D. 1110) and the Henricians (A.D. 1140) both became extensive sects earnestly opposed to the worldliness of the clergy and to infant baptism.[1]

Arnold of Brescia about this time, A.D. 1136–57, maintained the same views, but with a greater vigor and immediate political effect and distinctness than any of his predecessors or cotemporaries. Liberty, sacred and secular, was the great object of his life. He produced an immense effect upon Europe and his age, and gave an impulse to those reforming movements in the Church of Rome that are distinctly traceable as the germs from which, four hundred years later, sprang the great Protestant Reformation.[2]

This remarkable reformer on returning home to Brescia, his native city, was observed to have undergone a change. "The inspiring idea of his movements," says Neander, "was that of a holy and a pure Church. His life corresponded with his doctrine. Zealously opposing the corruption of the worldly-minded clergy, he set the example himself by his dress and his entire mode of living—a fact which even his most violent enemies could but acknowledge."

This was the young clergyman "who gave the first impulse to the new reaction against the secularization of the clergy and against the power of the Pope in temporal things." Impressed with holy fervor under the lectures of the celebrated Abelard, he put himself at the head of a party "in

[1] Neander, vol. iv. p. 595. [2] Ibid., p. 147, 162, 180.

opposition to the practice of mixing up things spiritual and secular." He required that the bishops should abjure their princely powers, and that the clergy should be content with whatever the love of the communities might bestow on them for their support. He was disposed to make much depend on experimental religion, or "the subjective character of the men" who officiated in church matters. In fact, the great object at which he aimed was a Spiritual Church, and one chief method of accomplishing it was to be its entire separation from the State, while the baptism of adults only was another.

As Dr. Brewster says,[1] "Insisting that the Kingdom of God is not of this world, he maintained that the temporal power of the Church was an unprincipled usurpation of the rights of princes, and that all the corruptions which disgraced the Christian faith, and all the animosities which distracted the Church, sprang from the overgrown possessions of the clergy." He commenced in his native city, but it was in Rome itself that the amazing power of this man and of his principles were chiefly succesful. He restored the Roman Republic, and maintained it for ten years. Four Popes successively driven from the Eternal City, tried in vain to subdue him. At last when Frederick Barbarossa, hired for that purpose, had succeeded in capturing him, so fearful of his popularity were those in power, that having strangled him in prison, his body was burned and his ashes thrown into the Tiber, lest the people should idolize his beloved remains.

The same desire for the purity of the Church which in one direction led him to oppose the mixing up of temporal power, in another direction brought him in opposi-

[1] Edinburg Encyclopædia, Art. Arnold.

tion to infant baptism. A cotemporary of his remarks that "he is said to have judged erroneously in regard to the sacrament of the altar [*i. e.* transubstantiation], and the baptism of infants."[1] Evervinus and Bernard, also his opponents, both appear to allude to him as ridiculing infant baptism, while in a Bull issued in 1181, the Arnoldists are included in the category of sects "not afraid to oppose the doctrines of the Church on baptism and the Lord's Supper." Indeed, Arnold was condemned by Pope Innocent II., in the Lateran Council of 1139, as an opponent of infant baptism. Dr. Murdoch, the translator of Mosheim, seems inclined to doubt if he is alluded to in the decrees of that council, because he is not mentioned by name. But a cotemporary writer, Otto Bishop Freysingen, expressly declares that he and the Petrobrussians were both condemned by that council, and his authority in this matter is justly regarded as decisive by Mosheim, Giesler, and Neander. Though the man was slain, his followers long survived as a distinct sect, and by such leaders, recruits were added, and other bodies of Christians were gradually drawn together by an inward principle and driven together by common persecutions, until under the name Waldenses several sects, dissimilar in many of their opinions though united in common Evangelical principles, continued to be known for centuries as the friends of spiritual liberty.

To what extent they rejected infant baptism has long been a matter of dispute. That many of them did so is beyond question. And, on the other hand, that some of the sects who went under this general name continued to practice it, we do not doubt. But Limborch, whose account of them Wall endorses as the most accurate and dis-

[1] See Giesler, vol. ii. sec. 51, note 6.

criminating,[1] says "To speak my own mind freely, the Albigenses and Waldenses appear to me to have been two distinct sects, and they were entirely ignorant of many tenets now ascribed to them. Particularly the Waldenses appear to have been plain men, unskillful and inexperienced, and *if their opinions and customs were to be examined without prejudice*, it would appear that among all the modern sects of Christians they bear the greatest resemblance to that of the Mennonites," or modern Dutch Baptists.[2] This author gives the acknowledgment of an Albigensian nobleman, on which he was condemned, that he had listened to one of the more distinguished of their teachers, Peter Auterü (about A.D. 1300), preaching that the baptism of water, made by the Church, was of no avail to children, who were so far from consenting to it that they wept. He also cites the sentence of the Inquisition on Stephana di Proando for denying, among other things, "baptism of water administered to children." Yet it is clear that they did not, as often supposed, deny all water baptism, but only its being essential to salvation, or useful to infants, for another witness is also cited saying that "no baptism availed any thing, *no not their own*."[3]

M. de Potter, in his Ecclesiastical History, says that "they opposed the sacraments, rejecting all the ceremonies of baptism except the ablution, and they had care that this should never be conferred on children of a tender age; and it is for that reason they used to baptize anew all the persons who, leaving the Romish Church, claimed to embrace their doctrines."[4]

[1] Infant Baptism, vol. ii. p. 230.

[2] History of the Inquisition, vol. i. chap. viii. [3] Ibid., chap. viii.

[4] See Hague's Centenary Address, Appendix, p. 77.

What is more remarkable than general statements of this kind, and more important to our present purpose, is that the strongest expressions in favor of liberty of conscience are found in the mouths of those who also opposed infant baptism. This we have already noticed, as well as the cause of it, in the case of Arnold of Brescia and the Dissertation on Antichrist.

There is an epitome of the faith of the Waldenses of the twelfth century, given by the Centuriators of Magdeburg, which does not say any thing about infant baptism one way or other, but asserts "the Pope hath not the primacy over all the Churches of Christ, *neither hath he the power of both swords.*" But another full confession of their faith of the same century (A.D. 1120), says, "We hold in abhôrrence all human inventions, as proceeding from Antichrist, which *produce distress and are prejudicial to the liberty of the mind.* We consider the Sacraments as signs of holy things, or as the visible emblems of invisible blessings. We regard it as proper and even necessary that *believers* use these symbols or visible forms when it can be done. Notwithstanding we maintain that believers may be saved without these signs when they have neither place nor opportunity of observing them."[1]

The testimony of an enemy is important here. Æneas Sylvius, afterward Pope Pius II. (A.D. 1458), in his History of Bohemia, gives this account of the Waldenses. He says, "they assert that the Church of Rome ceased to be the true Church from the time of Pope Sylvester, at which time the poison of temporal advantages was cast into the Church. * * * They reject all the titles of prelates, as pope, bishop, &c. They affirm that no man ought to be

[1] Jones, p. 333.

forcibly compelled in matters of faith. * * * They condemn all the Sacraments of the Church. Concerning the sacrament of baptism they say that the Catechism signifies nothing, that the absolution pronounced over infants avails them nothing—that the godfathers and godmothers do not understand what they answer the priest."[1]

In 1540 the Parliament of Aix passed a law that the Waldenses residing in Provence, and who were the subjects of the French King, "*should all be destroyed.*" This sentence was brutally carried into effect five years afterward. But they strove in the mean time to conciliate their persecutors by presenting them with a Confession of their Faith, drawn up in language of touching simplicity. In it they say, "We acknowledge that kings, princes and governors are the appointed and established ministers of God, whom we are bound to obey. From this power and authority no man can exempt himself, as is manifest from the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who voluntarily paid tribute, *not taking upon himself any jurisdiction of temporal power.* * * * By baptism we are received into the holy congregation of God's people, *previously* professing and declaring our faith and change of life."

Enough this to show that from the time of Pope Sylvester, that is, from the time of Constantine, when he united the spiritual and temporal power, there is every reason to feel assured that there has been a body of men who have opposed the whole of this, and have vigorously maintained freedom of conscience and the entire separation of Church and State. The above extracts will also show on what grounds and to what extent, even before the modern strug-

[1] Jones, p. 324.

gles since the Reformation, this may be considered a Baptist principle and peculiarity.

If we turn now to the history of this great principle since the Reformation, the Mennonites must claim our first notice. At a time when all other denominations sought to establish themselves by alliances with the State, and too frequently by becoming the persecutors of their brethren, the Mennonites, who sprang out of the Waldenses in 1536,[1] contended for perfect liberty of conscience, and that the magistrates had no right to interfere with religious convictions. This opinion is founded on "the one principle," which, as Mosheim justly remarks, is at the basis of all their peculiarities, *i. e.* "that the kingdom which Christ has established on earth is a visible society or company, in which is no place for any but holy or pious persons." Hence all connection with mere State institutions, where the terms of membership must be different, they regarded as injurious. In this they have always persevered, and when about the year 1820, on the publication of the proofs of their ancient origin, by Professor Upeij and Dr. Dermont, they were offered government support by the King of the Netherlands, and recognition as a State religion, they declined the bounty on the ground that it was contrary to their oldest and most settled principles.

How different was the conduct of all their cotemporaries in the work of religious reformation, great, pious and sincere as they doubtless were. There is not a Creed nor a Confession of Faith framed by any of the Reformers which

[1] See Mosheim's Cent. XVI., sec. 3, part 2, chap. iii., n. 22, and extracts from "An account of the origin of the Dutch Baptist's Religion," Ency. Art. Mennonites.

does not give to the magistrate a coercive power in religion.[1] Luther says of false teachers, "I am very averse to the shedding of blood. 'Tis sufficient that they should be banished," but he allows they may be "corrected and forced at least to silence, put under restraint as madmen." As to the Jews, he thought "their Synagogues should be leveled with the ground, their houses burned, and their books, even to the Old Testament, taken from them." Several of the Anabaptists were also put to death by the Lutherans "for propagating their errors, contrary to the judgment of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel."

Nor can Calvin be acquitted of the death of Servetus. He says himself "it was by my prosecution he was imprisoned," and expressed the "hope that they would condemn him to death, though not the terrible one of being burned." Melancthon, Bucer, and many other of the Reformers, wrote letters of approval, saying that "to endeavor to destroy his dreams by a train of reasoning, what would it be but to grow mad with a madman." Beza wrote a public defense of persecution, and in 1618 the Synod of Dort urged upon the civil power the restraint and punishment of heresy, in consequence of which one man was immediately beheaded, another condemned to perpetual imprisonment, and several to banishment.[2]

In England the same spirit prevailed. Henry VIII. burned Papists and Baptists at the same stake to prove himself Defender of the Faith, and Cranmer's hands were stained with the blood of pious women, while Queen Elizabeth re-lighted the fires of Smithfield, like her father, to burn Anabaptists and Catholics. King James resolved to

[1] Struggles and Triumphs of Religious Liberty, p. 87.

[2] See Cumberland's Introduction to Limborch's History of the Inquisition.

"break the spirit of the Non-conformists if it would not bow," and caused them to quit the country in large numbers. In the reign of Charles I., Archbishop Laud ruled the Church with a rod of iron; fines, imprisonments, cutting off the ears, branding in the face, and tortures of all kinds were inflicted.

Nor did the Presbyterians when they obtained the power, neglect using the authority of the State to persecute, as well as promote, in their turn. In 1638, while Roger Williams was battling for freedom of conscience with Massachusetts, and nearly thirty years after their principles had been publicly avowed in London by the Baptists, we find the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland interfering with the liberty of the press and the civil power in a manner never exceeded by Popery itself. They forbade "all printers in the kingdom from printing or reprinting *any* confession of faith, or protestation, *or reason pro or contra*," in regard to religious controversies, "without warrant subscribed by the clerk to the Assembly."[1] In 1642, Roman Catholics were ordered to renounce their "obstinacy" under penalty of banishment or imprisonment, as might seem fit.

Even the Brownists "agreed but too well with them," as Neal testifies "in asserting the necessity of an uniformity of public worship, and of calling in the sword of the magistrate for the support and defense of their several principles, which they made an ill use of in their turn as they could grasp the power into their hands." And the Independents while they reformed many of their opinions, held fast to this as we shall see.

On the restoration of Charles II., two thousand Non-

[1] Pictorial History of England, vol. iii. p. 472. Harper.

conformist ministers nobly resigned their benefices at once rather than conform to the tyranny of Government interference in a specific case against themselves. But they never publicly abandoned the principle of a union of Church and State, but remained just as Chalmers did who headed the Free Church movement, though theoretically in favor of an established religion. It may be questioned whether, a hundred years ago, if an establishment broad enough to have included them had been proposed in England, the bulk of the Independents would not have favored it.

But in 1560, early in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the Baptists in Great Britain publicly wrote and published their protestations against all persecution, for conscience' sake. John Knox replied to one of these publications, in a Treatise called "An Answer to a great number of blasphemous Cavillations, written by an Anabaptist and adversary of God's eternal Predestination, and confuted by John Knox." Alluding to persecuting Christians, the Baptist had said, "Be these I pray you, the sheep whom Christ hath sent forth in the midst of wolves; can the sheep persecute the wolf? Doth Abel kill Cain? Doth David, though he might, kill Saul? Doth he which is born after the Spirit kill him that is born after the flesh?"

To all this John Knox replies, "I will not now so much labor to confute by my pen, as my full purpose is to lay the same to thy charge if I shall apprehend thee in any commonwealth where justice against blasphemers may be ministered as God's word requireth. And hereof I give thee warning lest that after thou shalt complain that under the cloak of friendship I have deceived thee. Wert thou my natural brother I durst not conceal thine iniquity in this case."[1]

[1] Struggles and Triumphs, pp. 170, 3.

Toward the close of the sixteenth century their numbers increased in England. They regarded Christ as the Supreme Governor of the Church, denied that the queen had any authority to appoint ministers of religion, or frame any ecclesiastical government, and asserted that the Church ought to be composed of "lively stones," and that it was unlawful to baptize children.

It is true that on the accession of King James to the English throne, some few of the Puritans and Independents were favorable to a more enlarged religious *toleration* than was then practiced, under certain restrictions of officers, appointed by the State to supervise their proceeding; and a petition was presented to that effect in 1609, by a Mr. Jacob and others; but the inalienable right to liberty of conscience, even those petitioners had yet to discover.

About this time, also, a number of the Brownists, who already held to a converted church-membership, and had fled to England, followed out this principle to its legitimate conclusion, became Baptists and were excommunicated by their brethren in exile.[1] They also found light break upon them in regard to the principle of liberty of conscience and the union of Church and State. This led to a discussion of all these principles in Holland. In 1610, we find John Robinson, the celebrated Puritan divine, the father of the Pilgrims, writing earnestly in defense of the power of the magistrate "to punish civilly, religious actions," "he being the preserver of both tables and so to punish all branches of both." He is to "by compulsion, repress public and notable idolatry, as also to provide that the truth of God in his ordinance be taught and published, and by some

[1] Struggles and Triumphs, pp. 197, 8.

penalty to provoke his subjects universally unto hearing for their instruction and conversion; yea, to inflict the same upon them *if after due teaching they offer not themselves unto the Church.*"[1]

Opposed to him was John Smyth, originally an Episcopal clergyman, of such superior abilities that Bishop Hall speaks even of John Robinson as no more than his "shadow." He thinking it would be a great help and encouragement to the Baptists in England for the exiles to return and openly avow their sentiments, put himself at the head of his brethren and returned with them as their pastor to London, in order as they declared that Christ might say to them, ministering to their persecuted brethren, "I was in prison and ye visited me, in distress and ye comforted me." "They determined to challenge king and State to their faces, and not give way to them, no, not a foot." Thus they returned to their own country, there to vindicate the great principles of moral and religious freedom. How much England, how much America, how much the whole world owes and will owe to this one great act of unsurpassed moral heroism, who can tell? From the hour they set foot in England, those principles have been steadily advancing. From their advocacy, in all probability, Roger Williams, then a lad, must have first heard of them. And by him, some twenty-three or four years later, they were nobly evolved upon American ground, and thus became the germ of that perfect religious liberty we now enjoy. In 1611, they published a Confession of their Faith. In this, true to the Waldensian spirit that had existed for so many ages, they declare that "the magistrate is not to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, nor compel men to this or that

[1] Struggles and Triumphs, p. 210.

form of religion, because Christ is the King and Lawgiver of the Church and Conscience."

John Robinson in Holland not only opposed the return of Mr. Smyth to England, but was still more opposed to his views of the right of Conscience. In 1614, he published an attack upon these, which led to an extended controversy between him and Mr. Helwisse, Mr. Smyth's successor. The following passage will be enough to show the Baptist view in this discussion:

"The power and authority of the king is earthly, and God hath commanded me to submit to all ordinances of man. Therefore I have faith to submit to what ordinances of man soever the king commands; if it be a human ordinance and not against the manifest word of God. But my soul, wherewith I am to worship God, that belongeth to ANOTHER KING, whose kingdom is not of this world, whose people must come willingly, whose weapons are not carnal, but spiritual." "As to the breach of Christ's laws, His kingdom is spiritual, His laws spiritual, the transgression spiritual, the punishment spiritual, everlasting death of the soul. No carnal or worldly weapon is given to the supportation of His kingdom." "Magistracy is God's blessed ordinance in its right place, but let us not be wiser than God." Such were some of the words of Helwisse, and the avowed faith of all Baptists.[1] And yet, ten years after, we find John Robinson defending the right of the magistrates to persecute error, and promote what they think to be true religion, by the power of State. Well might he tell the departing pilgrims that he was "verily persuaded and confident that the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His holy word." Well would it have been for the principles of

[1] Struggles and Triumphs, preface, p. 11.

religious liberty if on the other side of the Atlantic the pilgrims had been ready to act upon that last counsel;—"if God reveal any thing to you by any other instrument of His, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry."

It will be evident thus far that the difference between the Baptists and all other Christian sects, at this time, was not one of degree, but of *principle*. It was not as to the measure of toleration, but of an inalienable right to abstract liberty of conscience. Nor was it a mere negation for which they contended, and on which they built, but a positive principle, that the Lord was King in Zion, that His control over the conscience was supreme, and that human interference was wrong because a usurpation of his prerogative.

While these publications were taking place in London (1615), Bacon, as Attorney-general, was torturing a clergyman for writing a seditious sermon he never even preached. In Bacon's own language, he questioned him "before torture, between torture, and after torture," as Dr. W. R. Williams who narrates this incident, well remarks, "thus turning the spit of human sacrifice." Sir Edward Coke refused to sanction this act as legal, in the following year.

About this time, or soon after, a Welsh lad was noticed by this same Sir Edward Coke on account of his manuscript notes of cases argued before the Star Chamber, and of Sermons. This great man, the promoter of liberty, became the patron, friend, and almost father of this lad, who in turn cherished an enthusiastic regard for the life and writings of his benefactor. Coke got him into one of the most famous public schools in London—the Charter House—where his abilities won him distinguished honors, and a pension for his support at the University The name

of this youth is still preserved at Jesus' College, Oxford—Roger Williams. It will ever be preserved in the records of the great statesmen of the world, of the great Lights of Religious Liberty, and above all of those whose names are written in heaven.

Ordained in the Church of England about 1628, he very shortly afterward became so strongly Puritan that he could not use the prayer-book of the Church of England, and found it unsafe to remain in the country for fear of the persecutions of Laud. In 1630, therefore, he sailed for America and joined the Pilgrims who had preceded him only by about ten years. But his zeal and the measure of his knowledge already had outrun theirs, and he soon found himself exposed to various kinds of misconstruction and persecution. It would seem that from the time of his arrival he steadily set his face against all kinds of religious intolerance, and compulsion in matters of faith and conscience. For five years, however, he remained among his Puritan brethen, his peculiar views gradually drawing round him warm friends on the one side, and stern opposition on the other, until at length banished from Salem in 1635, after fourteen weeks with neither bed nor bread, he settled down at Providence, there to develop the germ of a new style of government among men, one which recognized the rights of God as supreme, and presumed not to molest the conscience. For this government and on these principles he secured a charter, and at his own cost watched over its infant liberties.

To Rogers Williams belongs unquestionably the honor of being the first Christian legislator who formally recognized this great principle in the establishment and administration of any government. Nor is it easy to estimate the boldness required to achieve it, or the value of this success to the

world. Doubtless his love and veneration for his great patron had done much to form and mature in his mind principles of constitutional freedom applied to religion. But he went to lengths that his benefactor would never have thought of going, and for advocating which the descendants of that great man abused him grossly. It seems hardly probable that one of his cast of mind had failed to hear of and notice the controversy raging with fierceness all through his youth in London, on the subject of religious liberty. Certain it is that from the first he seems to have grasped with precision all the consequences of his principles. "It is wonderful," as Bancroft has said, "with what distinctness Roger Williams deduced his inferences, the readiness with which he accepted every fair inference from his doctrines, and the circumspection with which he repelled every unjust imputation." One thing is certain, it was the light within that enabled him to perceive a truth that might have remained hidden to this day from mere worldly sagacity and statesmanship. Even Oliver Cromwell, England's great Protector, and one less disposed to persecute than the Prelatists, or Puritans, of his day, developed not, in his whole course of government, one principle or practice of half the value of this to the world. Indeed, he claimed the right, as head of the State, to persecute Roman Catholics and Episcopalians, and even to examine every minister as to his call to preach. Not an uninstructive contrast might be exhibited to the world were Mr. Carlyle to place the characters of these two governors side by side, and weigh them in the balance impartially, either as to the ideas on which they wrought, or the consequences of them to the world.

But it is upon American soil, and by contrast with the principles then developing themselves on this side of the

Atlantic, that tne character of Roger Williams will be most fairly estimated. Strange to say, it is that Church drunk with the blood of the saints, which for ages persecuted the suffering Waldenses that alone has ventured to contend with Roger Williams for the honor of first proclaiming religious freedom to the world by law. Archbishop Hughes has preferred this claim in behalf of the Roman Catholic proprietor of Maryland, Lord Baltimore. But with what preposterous injustice this claim is urged, let facts show. It is said that, as early as 1632, he had recognized a general religious toleration. But where is the proof of it in any authentic shape before 1648? Not in the Charter certainly, which contains no single hint of any toleration in religion not vouchsafed by the laws of England. But, on the other hand, places of worship, it is provided, are to be consecrated according to the "ecclesiastical law of England," and all laws were to be "so far as conveniently might be, consonant to the laws of England," which would, of course, have force until others were enacted. The most which can be pretended, therefore, is, that the desire and intention to extend this toleration resided in the breast of Lord Baltimore, although he had not the power to give it the force of legal enactment. But we have seen that, so far as this was concerned, twenty-one years before this time, the Baptists in London had published to the world far more noble sentiments in favor of religious freedom. Roger Williams had probably uttered far higher principles two years before and for centuries and centuries the Waldenses had protested against the Roman Catholic Church for her opposition to all these very principles, and had maintained the doctrine of religious freedom far more thoroughly and fairly than Lord Baltimore ever dreamed of.

But it was not until 1649 that this toleration was duly enacted.[1] In what way, then, can it be pretended that the Roman Catholic has precedence of the Baptist as to dates. In 1630, Roger Williams commenced to preach in favor of religious liberty; and in 1636, having purchased territory from the Indians, commenced to found a colony on the express principle of perfect religious liberty. In 1638, others having joined, and purchased the territory of the present State of Rhode Island, a voluntary government was formally instituted by a solemn covenant of all to "submit to the orders of the major part *in civil things only*." Thus was a constitution formed on the express basis of a perfect liberty of conscience.[2] It is true that it was not until 1644 that Roger Williams obtained his Charter from the king. This was not sought, even then, because he deemed it necessary, but only expedient, as a means of preventing the encroachments of the colony of Massachusetts. This Charter was obtained, and solemnly accepted and adopted by the inhabitants, in 1647; and on the 10th of May, in that year, a body of laws was enacted, and the government further settled upon the principle of perfect religious liberty.[3] Even this last was about two years previous to any enactment in favor of toleration afterward established in Maryland. A more vital point, however, than one of dates remains to be considered.

The very word toleration implies a right to persecute; and how far was immunity in this case to extend? When first, in 1649, it took the form of law, while allowing general religious liberty to others, it denounced death, with forfeiture of goods, against all who should deny the Godhead of any of the three persons of the Trinity, and fine, whipping, and

[1] See Hildreth, vol. i. pp. 207, 347

[2] Hildreth, vol. i. p. 256.

[3] Ibid., vol. i. p. 322.

banishment, against all who should utter any reproachful words or speeches respecting the Virgin Mary, it was expressly declared that the Roman Catholic Church should have all its rights and privileges, and that, in particular, no Roman Catholic should be molested. In fact, it was a mere plan to include Papists in a religious liberty just broad enough to shield them from the persecutions of the Puritans, *but no broader.* Instead of equitable terms of citizenship, it would have put to death such men as Dr. Channing and Edward Everett; and even Robert Hall, for the opinions of his earlier years. These laws were never repealed, and only superseded a few years ago by the adoption of a new Constitution. They probably remain the law to this day in the District of Columbia.

Lord Baltimore was, indeed, no bigot, and far in advance of most of his own sect and age. But a claim like that put forth by Archbishop Hughes manifests a degree of effrontery rarely equaled. It will not be forgotten that just before the Revolution of 1688, James II. attempted a system of toleration of exactly this very character, merely to smuggle in the Catholics, and throw England back again into the arms of the Catholic Church. The treachery was discovered, and James II. lost his throne soon after, none considering religious liberty safe.

About fifty years after Roger Williams had first advanced his views on the subject of religious liberty, in 1682, William Penn published in London his celebrated "Frame of Government," which has been justly considered to contain some of the most wise and admirable views ever set forth by one to whom so much power was committed. Himself by birth the son of a Baptist, and by conviction a Quaker, no small degree of liberty of conscience was naturally to be

expected in the constitution of this colony. And he carefully provided "that all persons who confess and acknowledge the Almighty and Eternal God to be the creator, upholder, and ruler of the world, * * * shall in no ways be molested nor compelled to frequent or maintain any religious worship." Yet only those who professed "faith in Jesus Christ" were allowed to become freemen, a clause which would now, perhaps, exclude from the rights of suffrage not only every infidel and Jew, but a large portion of the very denomination to secure whose equal rights of conscience the colony was especially planted. This was far in advance of the age generally—it was in advance of Lord Baltimore's platform, out of deference to which it is not improbable that the clause as to faith in Christ was inserted, but it failed to recognize the true principle of "soul freedom," as set forth by Roger Williams in writings published forty years before. To Penn it doubtless seemed difficult to know where to draw the line, as it has to many both before and since. That all law essentially rests upon a religious basis no wise man can doubt. So far, therefore, as universal religion teaches man, as man, the rights and duties which he owes to his fellow-citizens, so far his fellow-citizens may insist upon those rights being fully respected and those duties enforced. And it may also be their aim and policy to afford every opportunity to cultivate the religious spirit, which is a part of man's nature universally. But it has no right to make opinions a crime, unaccompanied by any overt act. And to enforce what God has been pleased to reveal by special revelation, is an insult to Him who declared, "My kingdom is not of this world." Unquestionably those who acknowledge the truth of Christianity feel assured that it can in no way contradict natural religion, but, on the contrary, gives

to it its fullest, clearest, and most authentic expression, developing the highest moral truths ages in advance of what they might otherwise have been discovered by human wisdom. So far, however, as Christianity is a special revelation, and enjoins any new and particular duties on men, such as to be baptized or join a church, it is no part of the duty or right of the civil government to enforce them.[1] To do so is to interfere with the prerogatives of the kingdom of God. As to all matters of *belief* required by Christianity as a special revelation, it is still more objectionable to make them tests of citizenship.

Here the principles of Roger Williams are far in advance of those of William Penn. But no man, no body of men, should be made an offender for a word, and the Friends, as a whole, have argued and wrought nobly in defense of an unfettered conscience. To them has been given the prerogative of suffering greatly in this cause, and enduring more than any others, unless it has been ourselves. And yet a singular practical illustration may serve to show how dangerous it is to trust even the best Christians with one par ticle of excuse for using the power of the magistracy to promote the revealed truth, or put down error. In less than ten years from the promulgation of this "Frame of Government," the city of Philadelphia was thrown into no

[1] In regard to laws for enforcing the observance of the Sabbath, the first point on which Roger Williams commenced his protests, see Wayland's Moral Science, p. 190. A Sabbath, that is, a period for religious cultivation, is a duty of natural religion. Hence the observance of that duty ought to be protected from all possible molestation and *inconvenience*. Government offices should be closed, therefore, by law, and all influence without persecution thrown in favor of that day most acceptable to the consciences of the best and largest number of citizens.

little confusion by the interference of Quaker magistrates, as such, in a dispute purely religious.

George Keith, foreseeing that certain views of "plenary inward illumination" superseding the written word of God, would ultimately culminate in the modern Hicksite views, spoke much on this subject, for which he incurred fines and imprisonments from some of the authorities, who were Friends. At last the case came before John Holmes, a magistrate and judge of considerable influence, but also a Baptist. He at once refused to concur with the Quaker magistrates, alleging that "it was a religious dispute, and therefore not fit for a civil court." The Keithians broke off from the rest of the Friends in 1691, procured a lot, and built a house of worship in Second street, Philadelphia. And when, a few years afterward, the Baptists were unfairly expelled from a place of worship in Chestnut street, the use of this house of the Keithians was kindly offered to them. The members of that body shortly afterward became Baptists, and thus the house and valuable lot so long occupied by the First Baptist Church in Philadelphia, came into their possession—an apt illustration of the effects of the exact exercise of principles of perfect liberty of conscience. For some years there were many so-called Quaker Baptists connected with that church.

Down to the period of the American Revolution, all the other colonies probably, except Rhode Island and Pennsylvania, had more or less of an established Church, and therefore religious persecution. In Virginia, where, from the first, the Church of England had been by law established, many acts were passed of a most intolerant character. Lord Baltimore and the Romanists were persecuted until a state of almost civil war existed between that colony and

Maryland. Laws intended chiefly against the Quakers were used for the oppression of all, even the Presbyterians, and before A.D. 1650, more than one thousand New England Congregationalists had been driven away by her oppressive severities.[1] In that State, as we shall hereafter see, the Baptists suffered severely until after the struggle of the Revolution began.

In New England, as we have seen, the Congregationalists were, on principle, at war with liberty of conscience, persecuting bitterly alike Roman Catholics, Quakers, and Baptists, except as deterred by occasional interference from Great Britain. These errors brought about, by their natural operation, severe consequence. The same alliance of Church and the Magistracy, which led to the persecution of Roger Williams, led also to the burning of the supposed witches in Salem, the very town from which he was expelled. The same connection of the elective franchise and church membership, led to the introduction of Unitarianism through the half covenant system. This at least was one of the causes. In that colony no man could become a voter, or eligible to office, who was not a member of the Congregational Church. Hence arose a strong desire on the part of many of the children of the first settlers, men not themselves professing personal piety, to become members, so far at least as to possess political rights. To accommodate them, an act was passed in 1663 which recognized all persons sprinkled in infancy as members of the Church, and their children as entitled to baptism, even when the parents, making no profession of personal faith, were not admitted to the communion. In a few years later, another step inevitably followed, and such persons were invited to the table of the Lord,

[1] Howison's History of Virginia, vol. ii. p. 160.

because they were already *church members*. Thus were those who were not pious introduced into the churches in vast numbers. The pulpits were then recruited from their ranks, until the ministry became a mere profession, not requiring even an avowed belief in the doctrine of the new birth. Such was the union of Church and State in New England, and such its results.

The above is a rapid sketch of the history of religious liberty, *prior to the last hundred years*. It was essentially a Baptist principle, derived by them, and by them alone, from their views of church-membership. It was first introduced by Roger Williams into the registered principles of actual statesmanship. In all this he was the precursor of Milton, and the superior of Oliver Cromwell and Jeremy Taylor. Bancroft has still further justly said: "If Copernicus is held in perpetual reverence, because on his death-bed he published to the world that the sun is the center of our system—if the name of Kepler is preserved in the annals of human excellence for his sagacity in detecting the laws of planetary motion—if the genius of Newton has been almost adored for dissecting a ray of light, and weighing the heavenly bodies in a balance, let there be for the name of *Roger Williams* at least some humble place among those who have advanced moral science, and made themselves the benefactors of mankind."

§ II. Progress of Religious Liberty in the last Hundred Years.

There is not now probably a State or Territory in this Union in which there is left even the vestige of an Established Church, or of direct persecution on account of religious opinions, unless indeed among the Mormon settlements

in Utah. Hardly an American is to be found any where who would vote to restore these injurious principles. Indeed this may be considered as one of the most marked features of American, as distinct from European, Christianity.

But a hundred years ago it was not so. There was more or less of an Established Church, and of persecution for conscience' sake, in the laws of all Europe, and of every one of the colonies, excepting only in Rhode Island and Pennsylvania. This was not the fault of civil governments so much as of religious sects. Not a single Pedobaptist denomination held to the views now so universal in this country. Every one of them in turn had claimed and exercised the right to promote religion by law, which involves a right to persecute all opponents. It is now only about a hundred years (1746) since the Protestants ventured to appear publicly in Languedoc and the south of France, so dreadful was the bitterness of the persecution to which they were subjected from the Catholics, after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes; while, to this day, molestation and persecution of all Protestants are the most distinguishing characteristics of the French Papacy. The Episcopalians collected their tithes by law in England, and their tobacco tax in America, and conferred no offices of State but upon their own communicants, not suffering a Roman Catholic to vote, even in Ireland. Presbyterianism was as clearly established by law in Scotland, and Congregationalism in New England.

What, then, has wrought the change—what has given these United States such perfect religious liberty as all enjoy? Beyond all question, the successful working of the principles of a free conscience in Rhode Island and Pennsylvania. Massachusetts beside the one and Virginia beside

the other, fined, imprisoned, and maltreated in various ways, by law, for conscience' sake. Yet it was not found to render the people more religious. On the contrary, it alienated the minds of some of the best citizens from each other and from the State, and two of the most orderly, religious, and pleasant cities to reside in, even to this day, are Providence and Philadelphia, one being at the time of the Revolution the largest city of the Union, the other probably the wealthiest in proportion to its size. Hence, when a struggle came which called for the most perfect union and strength of every colony individually, and of the whole collectively, the only course was to discontinue every occasion of dissension and alienation, by allowing a perfect freedom of religious opinions.

One immediate occasion of bringing all these principles into action was the persecution and estrangement produced by the Established religion in Virginia, preparing and uniting the public mind, to no small degree, in such a manner as to precipitate the American Revolution. Rapacity in claiming the tobacco tax, which was the legal support of the Episcopal clergy, and negligence in the performance of their duties, had made the Established ministers unpopular with the planters, who had this tax to pay. A rotten system will, however, stand for a long time, provided there is nothing to give the people an idea of any thing better. But that idea once given, the first accident will overthrow an establishment that has lost its hold upon the affections of the people. It was so now. Some small but zealous bodies of Baptists, converted in New England in the revivals under Whitefield, had moved southward as missionary communities, and settled for a time in Virginia. They were called New Lights, on account of their zeal, and were for

many years the constant subject of every indignity. But their zeal sustained them, and the more they were persecuted the more they grew. The complete contrast which they exhibited to the prevailing coldness of all, and the utter deadness of the worldly ministers of the Established Church, elevated them in the eyes of the people. The Episcopal clergy lost their hold upon the religious feelings of the people by their profligacy, and these Baptists gained it by their zeal.

The magistrates and aristocratic friends of the Established Church felt their danger, and imprisoned all the more zealous Baptist preachers on whom they could lay hands. This only raised their popularity with the common people, until at length it became a saying of their enemies, that it was useless to incarcerate the Baptists, as they would only preach more successfully from the prison windows. A short crop of tobacco at this juncture did what otherwise a century might not have effected—it united the powerful and haughty aristocracy of Virginia with the masses, against the Established Church. Tobacco was scarce, and the price was high. The clergy demanded their per centage in kind, and refused to take the customary equivalent of the usual price per pound. The colony of Virginia passed a law in favor of commutation at the usual price, it being worth many times more. The clergy appealed through the Bishop of London, and an Order in Council nullified the law. So far, the Established Church triumphed. But when they brought a suit to recover, Patrick Henry, whose feelings were with the masses, inflaming the passions of the jury with his own eloquence, obtained a verdict against the law, on revolutionary principles, which practically nullified the power of the Crown, and made the colonial law su-

preme. From that hour, the influence of the Established Church was destroyed in Virginia. The aristocracy of Virginia, through the House of Assembly, at once united in retaining Patrick Henry, the man of the people, to defend them, by destroying the Established Church. The work was done effectually. Baptists still continued to be imprisoned and tried "for preaching the Gospel of the Son of God;" but this only awoke the orator of the people to higher efforts of eloquence. Liberty of conscience for persecuted Baptist ministers, was the theme which inspired him with an eloquence, the traditions of which almost surpass belief. These things all wrought upon the public mind to such an extent, that, in 1776, it is said fully two thirds of the people were dissenters. At the beginning of the Revolutionary War all persecution for religious opinions was forever blotted from the statute-books, and almost by the end of that struggle, the last vestige of the union of Church and State, or the compulsory support of religion, was, chiefly through the influence of the Baptists, abolished, in this the most populous and influential State of that time. Up to a certain point, the labors of Patrick Henry were of great use in securing these triumphs of religious liberty. He pleaded for them nobly and boldly, but the Baptists, on whose behalf he spoke, suffered for them and pleaded too. In some of the later stages of these movements, he hesitated and compromised, where Jefferson, who, though a free-thinker, had studied carefully the principles of the Baptists, took the lead, and carried them through. Others, of course, assisted in this great work besides Baptists; the Presbyterians, vigorously; and these two seemed to form the conscience, so to speak, of the movement. So little, however, were their principles appre-

ciated at the time, that the Methodists joined with the Episcopalians, and took decided ground in favor of the support of religion by the State,[1] and in every movement favorable to liberty of conscience and entire separation of Church and State, the Baptists "took the lead."[2]

Nor were they less active in other parts of the country, or in other ways. In Massachusetts, up to the time of the Declaration of Independence, the Baptists were subjected to severe persecutions by the standing order. Pecuniary assessments, considered quite unjust, were made in the name of religion. These demands the Baptists refused to pay, and their property was seized to large, often exorbitant, amounts, the object being apparently thus to break them up. A committee of remonstrance was formed in Philadelphia, and large funds were raised by committees of Baptist Churches and associations all over the country to assist in defraying their expenses and burdens.

What made their case harder was, that the very men who were upholding Church establishments among Congregationalists, were opposing them on purely Baptist principles, when urged by the Church of England. The English Government clearly contemplated the taxing of all the American Colonies to support the Episcopal clergy in them. Against this Dr. Chauncey wrote strongly: "We are in principle against all civil establishments in religion, and as we do not desire any establishment in support of our own religious sentiments or practice, we can not reasonably be blamed if we are not disposed to encourage one in favor of the Episcopal colonists." He went on to declare that the religion of Jesus Christ had suffered more from such establishments than from all other causes put together, and that

[1] Hawkes, p. 142. [2] Howison, vol. ii. p. 170.

the primitive purity, simplicity, and glory of religion would never be restored till they were all put down. And yet this very man for thirty years advocated the compulsory support of Congregationalist worship by law.[1]

The plan adopted in Massachusetts seemed indeed comparatively mild in itself, considered for an establishment. Each parish called its own minister, and then a tax was laid on all by law for his support. If dissenters could prove that they were members of some other congregation, to the support of which they paid, they were to receive a certificate of exemption. These certificates, however, were so little useful that, in the small town of Stanbridge, Mass., in two years the Baptists lost about four hundred dollars unjustly. In 1752 all Baptist Churches were excluded even from the power of giving certificates to their own members until they had got a document, signed by three other Baptist Churches, that they were conscientiously *Anabaptists*, or *rebaptizers*, which of course all such denied. In 1768 a law was made by which the proprietors could lay a tax upon *all the lands* for the support of the town minister. And in 1770 three hundred and ninety-eight acres of land, owned by Baptists, were sold to pay this tax. A single trial the year before had cost two hundred and fifty dollars. In fine they were subjected to great vexations and injustice.

To meet this, the Baptists of Rhode Island, New York, and Philadelphia, appointed committees of remonstrance to raise money, relieve their persecuted brethren, and to awaken a spirit in favor of perfect liberty of conscience and the separation of Church and State. Isaac Backus, the general agent of the Baptists for this purpose, was one whose name will always be remembered in the history of

[1] Backus, p. 186.

this struggle for the ability and zeal with which he united the whole influence of the denomination in favor at once of civil and religious freedom, most usefully to the cause of both.[1]

The first Continental Congress ever held was in 1774, in Philadelphia, two years before the Declaration of Independence. It had not been in session ten days before these comittees, as representatives of the denomination, memorialized Congress that they united with their country in defense of its privileges, and besought them to secure at once the recognition of *the inalienable rights of conscience.* Committees were appointed, and the whole subject was discussed with much earnestness. If no immediate result followed, the final effect fully realized the most sanguine hopes. For a time one of the leading men of Massachusetts, on his return from the Congress, endeavored to use the matter to excite popular prejudice against the Baptists. But it failed, and only showed that the matter had not dropped before the Continental Congress until the four delegates from Massachusetts had pledged themselves "to use their influence in favor of the religious liberty" the Baptists there contended for. And when, at the meeting of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts shortly afterward, the Baptists presented themselves and requested to realize the good effect of this influence, the following resolution was adopted, which the great change of popular feeling fully endorsed:

"In Provincial Congress, December 9, 1774.

"On reading the memorial of the Rev. Isaac Backus, agent to the Baptist Churches in this Government,

Resolved, That the establishment of civil and religious

[1] Hildreth, vol. ii. p. 577.

liberty to each denomination in the province is the sincere wish of this Congress; but being by no means vested with powers of civil government, whereby they can redress the grievances of any person whatever, they therefore recommend to the Baptist Churches that when a General Assembly shall be convened in this Colony, they lay the real grievances of said churches before the same; when and where their petition will most certainly meet with all that attention due to the memorial of a denomination of Christians so well disposed to the public weal of their country.

"By order of the Congress,

"JOHN HANCOCK, President."

Accordingly the Baptists memorialized the next session of the Massachusetts Legislature, 1775. In doing so they said, "Our real grievances are, that we, as well as our fathers, have from time to time been taxed on religious accounts where we were not represented, and our causes have been tried by interested judges. *For a civil Legislature to impose religious taxes, is, we conceive, a power which their constituents never had to give, and therefore going entirely out of their jurisdiction.* We are persuaded that an entire freedom from being taxed by civil rulers to religious worship is not a mere favor from any man or men in the world, but a right and property granted us by God, who commands us to stand fast in it. We should wrong our consciences by allowing that power to men which we believe belongs only to God."

This memorial was debated and referred to a committee, who reported favorably, and a bill was brought in, read once, and a time set for its second reading; but being crowded out by other business, the Baptists were shuffled

for a time out of what none now pretended to be other than just, and the last relics of Church and State were not abolished in Massachusetts until 1832.

But it was thus the Baptists defended this great principle in the forming period of the national mind and character. The Quakers sympathized in their principles, and their weight in Philadelphia was great, but the influence of the Baptists was more conspicuous from the *active* part they took, as chaplains, and soldiers, and advocates of the Revolutionary struggle. By the time of the close of the war of Independence, the principles of religious liberty had become almost national. In 1787 the act for the government of the North-west Territory provided that "no person should ever be molested on account of his mode of worship or religious sentiment in the said Territory." Nothing, however, had been done by Congress to secure religious liberty elsewhere. In August, 1789, therefore, a committee of the Baptist Churches in Virginia presented an address to General Washington wherein they expressed a high regard for him, but "a fear that our religious rights were not well secured in our new Constitution of government." In answer to this he assured them of his readiness to use his influence to make these rights indisputable, declaring that the religious society of which they were members had been "throughout America uniformly the persevering promoters of the glorious Revolution." In the following month, accordingly, an amendment to the Constitution was passed declaring that Congress should "make no law respecting any establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."[1] Thus was the whole weight of the example of the general government thrown against all religious establishments, and

[1] Backus, chap. 12.

its influence secured in favor of the free exercise of the conscience on all such matters.

About this time, *i. e.* 1788, the Presbyterian Church of the United States adopted a "Form of Government," in which they fully and distinctly express themselves in favor of perfect liberty of conscience, and the complete separation of Church and State.

Up to this time all governments, and nearly all men, however pious, had feared that if religion were left without other support than the free choice of the worshipers, it would decline. Nor was it any confidence in the purity of human nature that had led Baptists, so long before, to contend for an unrestrained conscience; rather was it a strong sense of the want which all men feel of just such a system as the Gospel to meet their deepest necessities, and to heal the diseases of the soul. It was not that they were indifferent to religion or to truth, but because they knew that while the sword of the magistrate might produce hypocrites, it could never make Christians. It was not even that they grudged tithes, but because they relied on the power of religion to support worship, and felt it an injury and an insult to conscience to make men pay for systems in which they did not believe. It was not that they despised human governments, but because they honored the government and authority of God, that they denied the jurisdiction of the magistrate in matters of religion. At the present day, no principles are so familiar to all ears, and so responded to by all hearts, through the length and breadth of this land. They spread with the principles of American independence, were incorporated in the Constitution of the Union, and now belong, without important practical exceptions, to each of the States.

The elements of nature are oftentimes most powerfully at work when most silent; and it was by quiet influences upon the colonies, such as have been portrayed, from the times of Roger Williams to those of the Revolutionary struggle, that the principles of religious liberty became incorporated, not only in the statute book of civil law, but in the religious belief and conscience of the United States, the great unwritten creed of American Christianity. The only astonishment and difficulty now with many of the readers of this work will be to conceive that the rights of conscience have ever been doubted and disputed.

The adoption of the Constitution, with its first amendment, before quoted, placed the United States foremost of all the nations of the earth in recognizing and sustaining the great truths of religious liberty. Its example and influence have been more powerful in diffusing these than can readily be expressed. Their leaven has worked, and is working, among the nations of the earth, and producing the most astonishing results.

In England, until 1829, Dissenters were barely tolerated. No man could hold any civil office, or have a seat in Parliament, or be even a simple collector of the taxes, without communing in the Church of England once a year. Now the Dissenters have the largest number of worshipers. It is hardly sixty years since the East India Company possessed the power, and openly used it, of preventing missionaries from sailing in English vessels for their possessions, supporting the native idolatries, and assuming to frown on and frustrate all attempts at conversion. Now this is abolished. The Test and Corporation Acts even have been repealed; the Union of Church and State is every year giving way at some new point; Canada is secularizing the Church lands

with the consent of the home government, and the Dissenters are being admitted into the Universities. If the Madiai are persecuted in Italy, or an Oncken in Germany —if, in any part of Europe, oppression for conscience' sake is carried on, next to America, England is the first to plead in behalf of full religious liberty.

The voice of public opinion is now heard and feared on these subjects by all the spiritual tyrants of Europe. Spain and Italy have been compelled to abandon the horrors of the Inquisition, and those abodes of terror to disgorge their prey. The King of Prussia is understood to be setting his face against intolerance, and the ministers of the Established Church of that kingdom, no less than its more enlightened members, are beginning to protest against infant baptism being compulsory, either to avoid persecutions or to secure membership in the Establishment. France has, by open proclamation, again and again given the most public and positive assurances of equal religious protection to all, and if these assurances are still in a measure violated, it is only by temporary intrigues of the Jesuits, which sooner or later will bring their own retribution.

At this moment the Mohammedan empire, whose persecuting sword used to be the horror and scourge of Christendom, has entered into a treaty with France and England guaranteeing throughout its wide dominions perfect religious liberty, and England is understood to be seeking the recognition of the rights of conscience as a part of the law of nations. In Burmah, where, thirty years ago, Judson was persecuted well-nigh to death, religious liberty is now fully enjoyed. In China an encroachment upon this great right produced the rising of that free party which is now so rapidly diffusing the name, at least, of Christ, and many

principles of His religion through that vast empire. Indeed, the leader of that movement is one who for months studied Christianity under a Baptist missionary at Canton, and, it is said, even applied for baptism, but was refused. Thus far, at least, has the whole world been coming round to these great truths, first embodied, vindicated, and maintained by the Baptists. Except the Russian dominions, there is hardly a country of importance in the world that has not felt the power of this principle. Progress has been made which a hundred years ago would have been impossible to anticipate; and from America to China, from England to India, doctrines of religious liberty have been carried home to the hearts of many millions.

CHAPTER III.

A CONVERTED CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP.

NOTHING will more forcibly impress the mind of a pious American, traveling in Europe, than the different religious atmospheres inhaled by the masses on the two sides of the Atlantic. It is a great difference that he will feel when he enters a Protestant as distinct from a Roman Catholic State. But there is a more striking distinction between American Christianity, as a whole, and that of the continent of Europe, where Church Establishments are in every country. Here a man's religious professions are the result of personal conviction; there they appear so uniformly as the effect of the law, routine, or instruction, as seldom to imply earnest individual piety at all. Not that devotion is lacking in Europe; but simply that the most religious do not pro-

less more than others, those utterly destitute of it being entitled to become its professors and its ministers as much as any others. Dr. Baird has observed that he found the most intelligent persons in Europe quite at a loss to comprehend this different feature of Christianity in the two continents.[1] Among all classes of Americans, however pious or however worldly, and as a general thing, of whatever denomination, the conviction seems natural that a man does not become a Christian merely in consequence of being born in a particular State, or inducted in infancy into a nominal connection with some church, but by personal choice and earnest religious character. All through Europe, except among certain small, well-marked evangelical denominations, the idea is current that every one born in a Christian land must be considered a member of the National Church, no matter what his private belief or character.

Here public sentiment, and the unwritten Christianity of the country, seem to suggest instinctively that none ought to be received as full members of any church, or regarded as true Christians, with whom sound morality and steady piety is not a matter of established personal influence and supremacy. We are not unaware that there are several exceptions to this spirit; and in some cases a settled purpose is evident to resist what is esteemed an American influence encroaching into the domain of religion. In the Roman Catholic Church, for instance, this determination is most strongly manifested on the part of most of the spiritual guides; and yet to any one brought up with Papists in Europe, the general change of sentiment among the laity in this direction, which by degrees manifests itself, is greater than could possibly have been expected. Roman Catholic-

[1] Religion in America, book v. chap. 4.

ism not only loses its hold on multitudes who come to this country, but it is altogether a different thing for those who remain in its communion from what it is either in Europe, or in Mexico, or in Canada. As when one who has long lived in a flat country, climbing a mountain top on a clear day, feels by the play of his lungs that the atmospheric pressure is not the same, and that he breathes a different air; so now even a Roman Catholic on coming to this country finds himself in a perfectly new religious atmosphere, one that has in it the pressure of a greater and more direct personal responsibility. The priest is no longer the mere tool of the bishop, nor the layman of the priest. It is not simply that both are more free, but also that both have a stronger sense of direct personal responsibility to God; not simply that the layman will not perform what he considers an arbitrary penance, but that he will claim his right to read the Word of God. And probably more Bibles are circulated and read by the Roman Catholics in this country than in any, perhaps, of all the countries of Europe. Large numbers of copies of the Douay version are freely to be obtained with the approbation of the priests themselves.

This silent change, giving to every man's religion a closer personal character, is also manifested in its degree in the Episcopal Church. So long as it was a national institution, it was necessary that it should admit every one to its privileges, and in England to this day the laws compel a clergyman to administer the communion to all baptized in infancy, and without reference to personal character, provided they are not proved to be scandalous offenders. The trouble and expense of establishing this proof are so great as to leave even the most pious minister very little power to withhold this official testimonial of the communion of the

Church. By the same law, however neglectful they may have been of every voluntary mark of Christian character, he is compelled to proclaim them when they die his beloved brethren who have "departed this life in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection."

But in this country the entire separation of the Church from the State has produced a very marked alteration and improvement in the character of the Episcopal Church. It is not merely that there is a vast increase of lay power, but a deeper sense of personal interest and responsibility resting upon the communicants as a class. So it is not a matter of simple form and routine for their young people on arriving at a certain age to be confirmed and partake of the communion, but to a greater extent than heretofore those only whose hearts are touched with a personal and supreme interest in religion receive the symbols. True, all this improvement is rather in practice than in theory, and the tendency among the clergy in some sections has been of late years to magnify and restore an exploded reverence for a merely ritual religion. Yet this is a movement with which the masses of the people of that denomination have but little sympathy. But some kind of knowledge and earnest regard for religion, some indications of personal piety are required more generally than ever before, while in many of the Churches their ministers preach the doctrines of the new birth and Christian conflict with the utmost clearness; nor would they think of recommending the people of their charge to appear at the table of the Lord without the evidences of conversion.

In the German Reformed Church, Drs. Nevin and Schaff, of the Mercersburg School, may contend that it is an error to attempt to have a Church below composed wholly of

those savingly converted to God; but this again is rather the effort of a few of the clergy to bring back their people to a state of things current a hundred years ago, and in Europe, than a movement generally sustained by the Churches. It is, in fact, an effort to galvanize new life into infant baptism. But the great mass of the reformed denominations in this country, of German origin, now hold to the propriety of requiring personal faith prior to full communion. The great numerical bulk of American Churches are united on the same point of a voluntary and converted Church membership. So wide-spread indeed is the conviction that unconverted persons should not be communicants, that very few of them would think it right to partake if invited. Denominations seem to be unpopular in proportion as they favor an unconverted membership. All of them, including Roman Catholics, Unitarians, and even Episcopalians, are shown by the last census to embrace not above a sixth of the whole Church-going population. Now it is, if we mistake not, this wide-spread conviction that Christianity does not consist in forms and ceremonies, but in the personal surrender of the heart to God, and that the converted alone should be communicants, which constitutes the great superiority of American over European Christianity.[1]

But however simple, clear, and natural all this may now appear, it was not so a hundred years ago. At that time the Baptists stood alone, the only denomination in this country that made a credible profession of personal piety a pre-requisite to their communion. It was then generally esteemed a Baptist peculiarity. It is so treated by Knapp in his Theology.[2] He admits that the Novations, Dona-

[1] See Baird's Relig. in America, b. v. c. 4. [2] Sect. 135, 2, and 141, 2.

tists, Waldenses, Wickliffites, and Hussites, also held it, and that their labors "had, upon the whole, a mighty beneficial effect;" that "in times of ignorance and unbelief they have been the depositories of uncorrupted Christianity," and that "without them the Reformation would never have taken place." Yet he maintains, in common with most of the Pedobaptists of Europe, that "the external visible Church can not be a society consisting of pious Christians only, but rather a *nursery* designed to raise up many for the invisible Kingdom."

A hundred years ago, except Whitefield, discarded as a "new light," there was scarcely an evangelical preacher to be found in the Episcopal Church in this country, or one who considered any thing more as necessary to regeneration or to make a man a Christian, than the baptism of his infancy.

It was not until within seventy years that the Methodists, now so efficient in evangelical labors, considered themselves as other than a mere converted society in an unconverted Church, from which they received the communion, and with which they identified themselves. They have therefore not unnaturally borrowed many expressions and views from the Church of England. Even John Wesley tried hard to uphold its teachings, on the subject of Baptismal regeneration, in language which no Methodist now teaches.[1] Their standard writers[2] regard baptism as the entrance of the visible Church. But by a happy inconsistency, produced by their evangelical preaching, they do not now seem to admit that persons ought to be complete members until after conversion. The language of their book of Discipline is, however not decisive,[3] and "seekers" are often urged to partake of

[1] See Wesley's Miscellaneous Works, vol. ii. pp. 157, 8.

[2] See Watson's Theology, vol. ii. pp. 595, 626. [3] Chapter ii. sec. 2.

the communion as a suitable means of grace to this day.

Among the Presbyterians it is just about a hundred years since Gilbert Tennent was founding Princeton Seminary to educate evangelical ministers. At that time, so far from conversion being esteemed necessary to full communion, it was a matter of formal discussion whether it was proper to require the credible profession of a change of heart in the ministry, and considered that it was not. At the present time, no body of Christians are more clear and judicious upon this point than the Presbyterians, both those of the old and those of the new school. Yet even now there is nothing in their confession of faith to prevent the reception of unconverted persons as communicants. The Established Church of Scotland, with a similar confession, does not require conversion. The change, then, is one in the spirit of the people, or the age, not in the constitution of their churches, or the text of their laws, and at the time to which we refer, the Tennents were jeered at as "new lights," and mere enthusiasts. To this day, their form of government[1] declares that all their baptized are members of the Church, and "are bound to perform all the duties of church members." Thus it is quite clear that however evangelical this excellent body of Christians may now be in practice, their Confession, and, above all, their infant baptism, have an opposite tendency, drawing them back toward a system which would introduce the world into the Church, by making the terms of admission too regardless of personal piety.

In the life of the late venerable Dr. Archibald Alexander, of Princeton, is found a record by himself of the struggles through which his mind passed on the subject of infant

[1] Book ii. of Discipline, chap. 1.

baptism. It refers to a period while he was President of Hampden Sidney College, Virginia, from 1797 to 1799, about ten or twelve years before his appointment to the more important post he so long and so honorably filled at the head of the Princeton Theological Seminary. "About this time," he says, "I fell into doubts respecting the authority of infant baptism. The origin of these doubts was *in too rigid notions as to the purity of the Church*, with a belief that receiving infants had a corrupting tendency. I communicated my doubts very freely to my friend Mr. Lyle, and to Mr. Speece (Presbyterian ministers, who were his assistants in the college), and found that they both had been troubled by the same. We talked much privately on the subject, and often conversed with others in hope of getting some new light. At length Mr. Lyle and I determined to give up the practice of baptizing infants until we should receive more light. This determination we publicly communicated to our people (churches in the vicinity which they statedly supplied as pastors), and left them to take such measures as they deemed expedient." We may hereafter notice the rest of the remarks by Dr. Alexander. At present we desire only to quote this to show that a belief in the "corrupting tendency of infant baptism led Dr. A. at one time very seriously to think and speak of "joining the Baptists," and that he could not get rid of these impressions without lowering his views "as to the purity of the Church." He intimates in fact that the Baptist notions on the subject are "too rigid." We have been happy to believe that our Presbyterian brethren have now practically adopted the principle of admitting to full communion those only who give credible evidence of personal piety. This is what Baptists have ever maintained, and we should be sorry to learn

that the denomination of which Dr. A. was so distinguished an ornament had abandoned it.

A hundred years ago, nearly all the Congregational Churches of Massachusetts were passing through the darkest part of that cloud which drove off ultimately so many into Unitarianism. For sixty or seventy years longer, it overwhelmed with confusion all attempts to establish the denomination on the basis of a converted membership. That rare and holy man, Jonathan Edwards, was dismissed from his church at Northampton, Massachusetts, for no other reason than the maintenance of these very views, and was, at the time of which we speak, laboring in exile, on this account, among the North American Indians. The teachings of Edwards, Whitefield, and the Tennents, which had led to "the great awakening," had also produced the desire in many quarters that the system then current of admitting all persons of reputable life, who had been sprinkled in infancy, to the communion-table, should be abandoned. Several churches had adopted Edwards' views, but the great body were opposed to them.

Large numbers of these "new lights," as they were stigmatized, became Baptists, however, on this very account. All the way between Massachusetts and Georgia, no other denomination held this principle of church-membership; nor was it until within about thirty years, that the Congregationalists became completely separated from the Unitarians, and the most fundamental part of their present constitution came to be a feature of their denominational character. Dr. Baird has shown that Unitarianism originally grew out of a dislike to the practice of requiring evidence of piety in candidates for admission to the churches.[1]

[1] Religion in America, book vii. chap. 3.

In 1790 there was but one Congregational Church in Boston that maintained orthodox views; and so cold had it become as to be unable to keep up any prayer-meeting. When its lamp of piety was well-nigh extinguished, it was the zeal incidentally imparted to those noble and struggling brethren at a Baptist Church that rekindled the smoldering fire in a Church "beloved for their fathers' sakes." Thus in due time they were enabled to throw off the incubus which had so long paralyzed their movements. But in 1812 all but two of these churches were still Unitarian.

The views of our Congregational brethren, therefore, on this subject of the relation of the baptized to the visible churches, have been extremely unsettled and contradictory at different periods, and in the view of different authorities. The Supreme Court of Massachusetts holds that part of the communicants with which the majority of the parish concur, to be "the Church," and on this decision Unitarians now hold many houses of worship and endowments. This must have been upon the principle that the children, being baptized, are a part of the Church. Infant baptism has always been held by them to produce some kind of connection with it, though precisely what, it is hard to define. Or rather, it has been with them, as with many other denominations, at those periods in which piety has shone the brightest, the effect of infant baptism has been least perceptible, while in proportion as personal religion has declined, the value put upon the ceremony has increased. For the first thirty years after the landing of the Pilgrims, none of those baptized in infancy were, in most of the churches, admitted to the communion, or other privileges of membership, until they professed personal piety. But in 1657, a Synod was called in Boston to consider this matter, in special reference to the

right of voting in the town meetings—a political franchise, yet permitted only to Church members. They decided that the baptized, as such, ought to be considered members of the Church, under its discipline, and should be admitted to all the privileges except communion. Even this last prerogative was generally accorded to them a few years later. About a hundred and fifty churches having been thus led off into Unitarianism, the orthodox Congregationalists have, amid a variety of theories, turned practically to the plan of admitting to church-privileges such only as give credible evidence of conversion. Dr. Bushnell, in his work on Christian Nurture, no less than Dr. Nevins, has clearly shown that the Congregationalists have never had any well-settled theory as to the precise relations of the baptized to the Church; but that the views of Edwards and their present course are essentially "Baptist in theory," and ought to lead those who hold them to become so in fact. The simple principle of believers' baptism naturally makes a credible profession of personal piety pre-requisite to visible church-membership; and it has been in a very great measure the bold and fearless manner in which our fathers upheld this truth by preaching and by practice, by which the whole Christian world has been so greatly reformed, and the religious sentiment of the country changed in its favor.

It has been worth all the prayers, struggles, and sufferings which it has cost, to effect what has been accomplished. What Baptist can look back upon the last century, and view the great change wrought in public opinion, and in all the prevailing denominations, without being ready to exclaim, "What hath God wrought?" Never, perhaps, in the history of the Church, has the great truth of a converted church-membership been so clearly taught as at the

present day. It is spreading on every side. Where missions are established by the evangelical denominations abroad, it is planted, and none are admitted as communicants until they give evidence of being personally and savingly interested in the truths of the Gospel. In England this principle has an entire ascendency among the evangelical Dissenters, and in all their missions, while many of the Episcopalians uphold it in all but practice, and through the circulation of such tracts as those of Leigh Richmond and others, spread it among all classes, and indeed all nations. In France and Switzerland, the writings of Merle D'Aubigné, and men of that theological school, open it to the large classes of readers. Throughout a large part of Germany, Denmark, and Sweden, it is spreading through the labors of men like Oncken and his associates. While in Prussia, the present King, as head of the National Church, has within a few months issued a document of much significance, announcing his "determination to place his inherited authority" in the hands of "apostolically-formed churches;" that is, as he goes on to explain, "churches of small apparent size, in each of which the life, the order, and the offices of the Universal Church are brought into activity, in short independent self-increasing creations, by which, as with living stones, the Apostles of the Lord commenced building." Doubtless the researches and communications of such men as Neander and Bunsen, no less than those of Oncken, have in part produced these salutary convictions.

It is a pleasant and a glorious thing to see human learning and power coming round at length to concede and to support, in the very same terms, what for centuries our fathers have contended and suffered for all over the world, *i. e.*, that every true Church of God is built up of lively

stones a spiritual house. Far be it from us to undervalue the labors and principles of all other evangelical Christians in bringing about a healthy state of religious opinion on this important point. Every sermon preached on regeneration has contributed to this result. But to us it seems clear that if the evangelical religion of other denominations is in favor of the truth in question, the practices of Pedobaptists are essentially opposed to it. In a word, Baptists alone can consistently advocate a church-membership composed exclusively of those who make a credible profession of personal piety. It is necessary for the sake of their other principles. But all Pedobaptists hold it only by a happy inconsistency with theirs. For if infant baptism does not entitle its recipients to become visible church-members, what does it effect? Just now all this may be called the popular sentiment of the whole country, but the time might soon come, should the practice of infant baptism remain, when all should retrograde. This, the late declension of evangelical sentiments in the Episcopal Church, and the writings of the Mercersburg School, indicate but too plainly. Dr. Baird, in his "Religion in America," represents many persons in Europe as utterly unable to comprehend the relation which the children of pious parents sustain to the churches in this country. He speaks of it as one practically "invisible" in all evangelical communions, and presses, as the advantage accruing, that the unconverted "occupy their proper place."

Thus on the one hand infant baptism is perpetually draw ing all these churches into the vortex of a mere ritual relig ion, while on the other, evangelical truth, so far as it prevails, leads the people to become, as Dr. Nevin and Dr. Bushnell both show, "*Baptist in theory*," even where they neglect to become so in practice.

CHAPTER IV.

SACRAMENTS INOPERATIVE WITHOUT CHOICE AND FAITH.

Chevalier Bunsen in his work called "Hippolytus and his Age,"[1] says, "The superstition that such children of Christian parents as die of tender age, unbaptized, are under damnation, from which they must be rescued by baptism, is to be put down forever." That is, we suppose, if it can be, while the practice of infant baptism is retained. We may grant that well-informed persons have by degrees given up the idea in question, but this has been because they have become wiser than the system which, as Coleridge has shown, naturally implies it. A century ago there were few Pedobaptists probably, in any denomination, who did not suppose that baptism rendered the infant more safe. At that time there was among them all a strong tendency to regard both the ordinances of our religion as good works to be performed as means to procure grace and conversion, rather than as expression, of a faith already living. We have traced in the last chapter the extent to which a more appropriate view has come to be taken of the Lord's Supper, and the steps by which this change has been brought about; so that now the bulk of evangelical Christians regard it as the appropriate symbol, but not the meritorious means or procuring cause of true faith. It is difficult to conceive why this change of views should not be extended to both ordinances—why those who are not esteemed fit for one should yet be regarded as proper subjects for the other. To refuse the Lord's Supper to the unconverted,

[1] Vol. iii. p. 212.

and yet to include them within the pale of the visible Church by baptism, is an inconsistency that can not stand. Time will soon kill it, if it does not die in any other way. We know that of the multitudes who now practice infant baptism, comparatively few in this country believe baptismal regeneration; but it is not so in Europe; and in proportion as any utility whatever is attached to it, both the necessity and the power of something other than personal faith to make the condition "more safe" is presupposed. In this way the ceremony cuts at the root of the great doctrine and work of the Reformation. Let any one read the thirteenth article of the Episcopal Church in relation to good works before justification, and say if, by every fair rule of interpretation, infant baptism does not stand in opposition to its principles.

The blood which goes into the lungs a dark inert mass, poisoned with carbonic acid, comes from them of a bright scarlet, having parted with its poison and absorbed the oxygen of the atmosphere. It is thus vitalized, and made capable of sustaining life. So in the gospel the sacraments need to be vitalized by a living Faith, in the experience of each professor, without which they only carry with them poison and death into every ramification of the spiritual system to which they extend.

If any one doubt the tendency of infant baptism to infuse a poisonous influence into even the most evangelical creed, let him but notice the terms in which it is spoken of in all Protestant symbols. The Lutheran Confession drawn up by Melancthon, approved by Luther, and adopted by the Diet of Augsburg, "the mother symbol of the Reformation," as it has been termed, says (Art. 9), concerning baptism, that "it is necessary to salvation," and that "children are to be

baptized who, being offered unto God in baptism, are received into the favor of God." It condemns the Anabaptists "who prohibit the baptism of children, and affirm that they can be saved without baptism." In Luther's Catechism, it is expressly taught in words, that "by its effects our sins are forgiven, our souls are delivered from the power of death and Satan; and eternal happiness is bestowed on all who believe that God means to do all that He has said and promised." The Augsburg Confession is to this day the standard of the Lutherans and Moravians; it has been adopted by the major part of Protestant Europe, on the Continent, and its language in this respect, is fully sustained by the Confessions of Bohemia, Saxony, Wurtembeg, Helvetia and Sueveland.

In the Episcopal Churches of England and of America, immediately before the baptism of each child, it is solemnly prayed that the "infant coming to holy baptism may receive remission of sin by spiritual regeneration;" and again, "Sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sins;" while the parents are immediately afterward sent back with the assurance that "this child is regenerated and grafted into the body of Christ's Church," and are called upon to give thanks to God that "it hath pleased Him to regenerate him with His Holy Spirit, to receive him for His own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into His holy Church." Even the well-known Mr. Melville, while pleading for a further "daily renewal," yet says, "we believe it to be specially and through the sacrament of baptism that the Holy Ghost acts in renovating the nature which became corrupt through the apostasy." "We really think that no fair, no straightforward dealing can get rid of the conclusion that the Church holds what is called

baptismal regeneration. You may dislike the doctrine, you may wish it expunged from the prayer-book, but so long as I subscribe to that prayer-book, and so long as I officiate according to the forms of that prayer-book I do not see how I can be commonly honest and yet deny that every baptized person is on that account regenerate."[1]

Such are the views of the evangelical Melville, republished in this country within a few years, and endorsed by Bishop M'Ilvaine.

In the Methodist Church, the form for the baptism of infants happily omits the above sentiments, thus showing their sense of their obvious incongruity with evangelical religion. In the Doctrinal Tracts, however, published a few years ago by the Methodist authorities in this country, is a Treatise by Mr. Wesley full of the baptismal regeneration of infants, and declaring that "in the ordinary way they can not be saved unless original sin be washed away in baptism;" that by it "we who are by nature children of wrath are made children of God;" and that "by water as a means we are regenerated and born again."

Now this language of Mr. Wesley was written rather less than a hundred years ago. We are happy to feel assured that very few, if any, of our Methodist brethren believe it now. But it belongs naturally to the system of infant baptism, and thus has been in a measure thoughtlessly transferred in a form used by them to this day in the baptism of adults. "We call upon Thee for these persons that they, *coming to Thy holy baptism*, may receive remission of their sins by spiritual regeneration." It is difficult to know what a Methodist minister would do in case a person should

[1] Melville's Sermons, the Spirit on the Waters, volume ii. page 306.

say to him, "I seek baptism because I have been regenerated and my sins are forgiven."

In the confession of the Presbyterian Church, baptism is declared to be "generally necessary to salvation." And as this with them usually means infant baptism, we have here sacraments regarded as efficacious without faith in the recipient; acting, therefore, necessarily by an *opus operatum*, "generally necessary to salvation." If this were true, how many a parents' heart might be lacerated if his child died without baptism. We may smile at all these as now obsolete ideas, which they unquestionably are, among the best informed in this country, but hardly among the numerical majority, even here, of those who practice this rite, and certainly not in Europe. But a hundred years ago these confessions of faith represented fairly the state of the current belief. Nor are there lacking many attempts to revive such opinions in the most influential quarters now. What can we think of Dr. Nevin, for instance, declaring that the Church "makes us Christians by the sacrament of holy baptism, which she always held to be of supernatural force for this very purpose."[1]

The opinions of our Congregational brethren are exceedingly various and doubtful. Some of them seem, in former times, to have followed Calvin in the idea that it accrued only to the benefit of the elect infants who received it. Dr. Stoddard, of Northampton, held that the sacraments are to be regarded as means of grace offered to all who hold the Christian faith and maintain a correct life without any reference to a change of heart. Dr. Bushnell[2] speaks clearly in regard to the contradictory opinions that have been held on

[1] "Christian Nurture," p. 97.

[2] Arguments for Christian Nurture, p. 60.

this subject by the New England divines. As a Congregationalist, writing at the present day, he shows the progress of what he would cheerfully admit to be Baptist views, as will be evident on examination.[1] Probably when Edwards wrote, the Congregationalists of New England would all have agreed to this, a ground not uncommonly held now, that infant baptism in some way renders the condition of the child who dies in infancy "more safe." It must mean all this if it mean any thing. And this Coleridge once declared seemed to him "the strongest argument of all against it, namely, that it supposes, and most certainly encourages, a belief concerning a God the most blasphemous and intolerable," *i. e.*, that the want of it may occasion their "eternal loss."[2] In order to avoid this difficulty our Congregational brethren have been wont to affirm that baptism does not place the children of believers in the covenant which belongs to them by *birth*, it is only the public recognition and *seal* of this covenant. This, however, does not evade the difficulty, if their condition, they dying in infancy, is supposed to be made a whit more safe in consequence of this seal.

In the present day it is difficult for most persons to embrace such a view of the character of God as that expressed by Coleridge. Infant baptism is most dangerous to the present age, therefore, on account of the support it gives to the Popish doctrine of an efficacy residing in sacraments and the works of others, without any faith of our own. Thus it opposes the whole gospel system of regeneration by the Spirit, and justification by faith. Nobly was this last preached by Luther and his associates at the Reformation; clearly and thoroughly is it preached by our evangelical

[1] Christian Nurture, pp. 60, 90. [2] Coleridges' Works, vol. v. p. 192.

brethren, of many different communions, at the present day. So far as the Lord's Supper is concerned, Zuingle and his followers, at least, held it to be in itself a symbol of the body and blood of Christ, and as such useful only where it is the expression of faith in Him. This is the view that Baptists have ever taken of both the ordinances of the Christian religion. They never baptize or admit to the Lord's table any who have not previously made a credible profession of personal faith. It has thus never been possible for them to magnify either of those sacraments into saving ordinances.

But in this they have had to stand alone as a denomination. It is true, indeed, that when Luther was pressed by the contradiction between justification by faith alone, and infant baptism, he, by a stretch of fancy in which few have been able to follow him, declared that infants had faith in the germ, and therefore were entitled to baptism on that account. It has since been administered on the ground of the promise of sponsors that they should believe, or on the faith of the parents. The custom, however, has always proved a part and pillar of Popery, and afforded the most effectual of all arguments in favor of the Romish view, and against justification by faith alone. The testimony of Baptists that the faith of the recipient is necessary to render sacraments acceptable, is, on this account, important to the Church, and all that they demand is readily conceded by evangelical Christians when arguing in favor of justification by faith. Yet it is lost sight of by them when defending infant baptism, while the upholders of sacramental efficacy then stand with consistency upon the natural import of that ceremony. Here, indeed, is the point of extreme divergence between evangelical religion and the most fatal super-

stition of the Church of Rome. The Papists contend for an efficacy residing in the sacraments themselves, an *opus operatum*, and they appeal to infant baptism in proof. And it must at last be conceded that it does the child good in that manner or not at all.

It is thus the great prop and pillar of sacramental efficacy and all sacerdotalism, wherever it exists, from Cardinal Wiseman to the Bishop of Exeter, and from him to Dr. Nevins. "The dogmatic theory of baptism" says the Bishop of Exeter, "becomes of necessity the basis of the entire scheme of Anglican theology." And the North British Review, the organ of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, avows that all this can only be answered by conceding the *entire unscripturalness* of infant baptism:

"The capital, the fatal objection to the present baptismal service of the Church of England, is that in no case of unconscious infants can we reasonably suppose that the spiritual grace therein implied has been obtained through the spiritual qualification of the recipient. If a spiritual effect has been produced on the soul of the infant, it must have been produced wholly on man's side by the agency of the priest, his outward act has altered the mind of the baptized person without any consciousness of his own. This is a superstition which contradicts directly the very idea of Christianity, but it is also the essence of sacerdotalism. It is indisputable that if the term regeneration expresses any spiritual effect on the soul, the baptismal service countenances the sacramental system and the priestly theory. And precisely the same result follows also if (as some High Churchman who hesitated to ascribe to the sprinkling of the baptismal water a transforming power on the soul have imagined) the effect of baptism is limited to the washing

away of original sin. This supposition implies that an infant who had the misfortune of dying before baptism, necessarily retains the burden of original guilt, and as Augustine and many others have believed, falls under eternal condemnation. How any person, who had obtained the faintest insight into the meaning of the Christian religion could have brought himself to believe that God consigns an unconscious and helpless being to eternal happiness or eternal misery according as an external and purely mechanical operation has been performed upon him by the instrumentality of others is what we have never been able to conceive. But certainly if life or death, and that forever, depends on an outward rite without the slightest mental concurrence on the part of the recipient, the fundamental idea of a priesthood, the intervention of a human mediator between God and man, is established, sacerdotalism has gained its principle, it will have an easy victory over every other impediment.

"But, thank God, there is not one word in the New Testament which in the slightest degree sanctions so terrible a doctrine: we are spared the pain, to say the least, of seeing the Christian Scriptures contradicting their own ideal of Christianity. The origin of the mischief is plain. The doctrine of the baptismal service is true; the unconsciousness of the infant is the real *fons mali.* * * *

"The language of Scripture regarding baptism implies the spiritual act of faith in the recipients. When infant baptism is now spoken of, the necessary modification must accordingly be made in applying language used by Scripture concerning spiritual baptism only. Inextricable confusion has been the inevitable consequence when language used of adults, of persons possessed of intelligence, and capable of

spiritual acts, was gratuitously applied to unconscious infants."[1]

We feel persuaded that it would be great injustice to other evangelical denominations to suppose that now the relation of faith to ordinances is not generally preached by them. But it is a change which has been produced by the vital and irrepressible elements of evangelical principles within them, counteracting the effects of the Pedobaptist principle, and, as we shall show, destroying, in a great measure, Pedobaptism itself. The spirit of the age—the spirit of a purely voluntary religion, or rather the progress of Baptist sentiments keeps the tendencies of this error in check, and reduces it to the insignificant position it just now occupies in this country compared with other countries, and in this age compared with other ages. But in all discussions between High Churchmen and Low, those who hold to baptismal regeneration and those who do not, it is only by discarding infant baptism that evangelical truth can be for a moment maintained. This is conceded as undeniable in the article of the "North British Review," from which we have before quoted.

"The non-recognition of the fact that the external rite of infant baptism is not the baptism spoken of in Scripture, is the source of the palpable weakness of English Low Churchmen in the discussion of this question. They have reason and religion on their side, but in the appeal to Scripture they are undeniably worsted by their opponents. No shift will ever help them. The advantage possessed by the High Church party rests on the assumption that what is said of baptism in Scripture may be equally said of the infant baptism practiced by the Church of England, and nothing but a de-

[1] North British Review, August, 1852, pp. 209, 10.

nial of their complete identity will, or can strip them of this advantage. Evangelicals are afraid of looking the truth in the face. They are hampered by a superstitious feeling about infant baptism, they are afraid of discrediting it, in spite of the many excellent reasons which justify its adoption; and they are still more afraid of saying that the baptism of the Church of England is not identical with the spiritual baptism of the Apostles. So long as they refuse to admit the real truth, so long must they be content to carry on this all-important controversy at a fearful disadvantage, and so long must they continue to experience the bitter consequences of the fact, that here *the spirit of Popery*, under one or other of its more specious forms, has, for the last three centuries, retained a footing within the very stronghold of Protestantism, from which it has never yet been dislodged."[1]

We are not, however, at liberty to suppose, from the rapid and important, but silent changes of the last century, that baptismal regeneration is finally dying out, and will struggle no more. Error embodied in ordinances and great public acts may seem to die for awhile, but it is only like a foe that retires from the plain to intrench himself within a fortress. A few years ago it was supposed that the Episcopal Church was all becoming evangelical, until Puseyism awoke the slumbering High Church feeling, and from behind breastworks, made but of the rags of gowns and cassocks, reconstructed a system of spiritual tyranny and ritual religion, worse by far than the better portions of the Church of Rome.

But if priestly garments formed their temporary sandbags, infant baptism was by them felt to be the main fortification—the citadel of their whole strength. Thus, for

[1] North British Review, August, 1852, p. 211.

instance, in "Tracts for the Times," No. 67, the author, having to prove the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, quotes those strong passages of Scripture in which all baptized *adults* are addressed as regenerated. He then quietly remarks that "a question not unnaturally arises, now that the people undertake to solve the difficulty for themselves —Do all the promises and descriptions of baptism apply to *infant* baptism?" To this he replies, "Certainly, unless they did, in effect, infant baptism were wrong, for so we should be depriving our children of whatever benefits it were supposed that adult baptism conferred, and infant baptism was incapable of. But since *infant baptism is right*, then must it confer in effect, and in the rudiments, *all* the benefits of adult baptism to be developed hereafter."

If the still further progress, not alone of Baptist sentiments, but of their practices, is desirable, it is mainly as affording the best, the only real security to the Church and the world, for the perpetuity of these great principles, of which the Baptists have alone been the consistent and unflinching advocates. Of these, this is not to be esteemed the least important, that the sacraments have in themselves no saving power whatever, but depend for all their value and acceptability on the faith of the recipient. These principles evangelical Christians are now generally willing to concede; but until infant baptism be openly abandoned, there is a constant tendency to reaction, a danger of relapse. The entering wedge for the recurrence of all that is most fatal in the delusions of Popery is in the crevice, and a few hard blows may at any moment split all other Protestantism to pieces.

It is not, therefore, merely in regard to the time and circumstances of a ceremony that Baptists are contending, but

it is for *principles* the most valuable of any embodied in the Reformation from Popery, or in the whole range of evangelical piety—principles for which the Baptist denomination alone have consistently and unwaveringly contended during the last hundred years—principles at this moment popular with the body of evangelical Christians, but for the permanence of which popularity they desire more full security. So long as infant baptism is preached, a Newman, or a Pusey, or a Nevin, or a Schaff, can, without much torturing, convert it into an acknowledgment of baptismal regeneration on the one side, and a Stoddard or a Bushnell make it the entering wedge of a lax church-membership on the other.

CHAPTER V.

BELIEVERS THE ONLY SCRIPTURAL SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

SECTION 1. THE BAPTIST VIEW STATED.

Not quite a hundred years ago was born one who for many years was a Baptist minister of great usefulness. It has been the lot of the writer of these pages to preach occasionally in the pulpit that was once his, and to administer the rites of religion to several of his descendants of three successive generations. Three of his children, eleven of his grandchildren, and either five or six of his great-grandchildren, have, to the knowledge of the author, joined the same denomination, by a profession of their personal faith, in Christian baptism. Nor is he aware of more than one of all his descendants having reached the age of twenty who has

died without being baptized, or who is now living without having submitted to that ordinance. Most of them have made a profession of religion early in life, and one most satisfactory case, some years ago, at the early age of ten years. It was when some of these young persons were about to be baptized that the writer was naturally led to consider the progress in this country of those principles of which their great-grandfather had been so powerful an advocate. Then it was that the ideas of this work first presented themselves to the author.

And these circumstances are now mentioned both for the encouragement of pious parents who dedicate their children to God by prayer, as showing His love and faithfulness to children's children, and also to relieve the scruples and fears of such Christians as suppose that infant baptism is required in order to render his gracious promises to Christian parents more firmly sealed and sure. Baptists maintain as strongly as others the duty of *all* parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They acknowledge the propriety of Christians consecrating themselves and every relation they sustain, to God, whether as husbands, or as wives, or as parents, and humbly dedicating all connected with them. Thus are their children holy, and thus their wives or husbands.[1] If any special services seem wise and fit to impress or recognize all this in regard to any relation, the Baptists are ever glad to avail themselves of it. They have quite as usually as other Christians sought of God's ministers a nuptial blessing, where a merely civil ceremony would have answered all legal purposes. They are accustomed daily to implore God's blessing on their families, and over each meal. Sometimes Christian parents

[1] 1 Cor. vii. 14.

have solemnly presented their children by public prayer offered in the house of God, that he would bestow upon them his heavenly grace, and pour his blessings on their seed. But Baptists have ever opposed transferring baptism, a divine ordinance instituted for the believer, to the person of an unconscious babe. This perverts a Divine institution, and can do them no good. All that is proposed can be better accomplished by prayer alone, while it robs them in after years of this commanded confession of Christ, when personal faith would give it vitality and usefulness. With as much propriety might Christians baptize the unbelieving wife on account of the faith of the believing husband, as the unthinking infant because the child of a Christian.

Not long since, a converted Roman Catholic professor of theology from Italy, when at his request the subject of believers' baptism had been explained to him, quickly asked, "But what then of those who die in infancy—are they all lost?" It was instantly replied that his remark suggested the most fatal objection possible to infant baptism, namely, that it takes for granted, or at least strongly implies, danger that without it infants are not safe.

SECTION 2. INFANT BAPTISM CONCEDED TO BE UNSCRIPTURAL.

Many intelligent Christians, many ministers of the Gospel, who have not looked closely at the history of this controversy, are little aware how completely the researches of the last hundred years have proved the truth and importance of such views of believers' baptism. One after another we shall show how the different arguments, both from the Bible and from history, in favor of infant baptism, have been given up, and argued against by the most enlightened Pedo-

baptists themselves, in fact that the whole system is crumbling to pieces, and is admitted to have no foundation in Scripture.

A hundred years ago, the substitution of sponsors was probably esteemed as a sufficient apology for the want of personal faith, with a large portion of those who preached infant baptism. In the Episcopal Church it is to this day formally stated in their catechism, as if it were considered the strongest argument in its favor:

Ques.—"What is required of persons to be baptized?"

Ans.—"Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament."

Ques.—Why, then, are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they can not perform them?"

Ans.—"Because they promise them both, by their sureties; which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform."

This ground, however, is now little thought of. Except in the Catechism, or to children, no one would think of using it. Sponsors would do all very well as an authority for infant baptism, provided we could only get sufficient authority for the sponsors. The use of them has been given up by the Presbyterians, and most of the reformed churches, since the Reformation, as a corruption. No authority for them is to be found before the time of Tertullian, A.D. 200. Indeed all uses for which such an argument could be seriously brought forward in the present day, must be based upon the authority of the Church to *alter* the institutions of primitive Christianity. Dr. Bunsen justly says: "The theories respecting Pedobaptism, according to any of the systems of the Reformation, would be perfectly unintelligible

to the ancient Churches, and can not be brought into harmony with their consciousness and monuments, except by fictions and conventionalities. But these fictions and conventionalities are also required for our own age, *and it can not be denied that on the whole they prove inefficacious and insufficient, and do not satisfy the public conscience.* Those who deny this fact show as much an ignorance of the real state of the world, as of the nature of Christianity."[1]

It used to be supposed that there were many clear and direct proofs of infant baptism, both by command and example, to be found in the New Testament. But Dr. Woods, of Andover, admits candidly that "it is plain that there is no express precept respecting infant baptism in our sacred writings," and that consequently "the proof that it is a divine institution must be made in another way." Knapp, also, in his "Theological Lectures," says that "there is no decisive example of this practice in the New Testament;" and again, that "there is no express command for infant baptism, as Morus justly concedes," and thinks it "sufficient to show that it was *not forbidden* by Christ."[2]

But all this only represents the state of theological opinion in a past generation. Now it is very different. When, for instance, the "North British Review" is arguing against the Puseyite writers in the Church of England, it does not hesitate to urge such assertions as these: "Scripture knows nothing of the baptism of infants." "There is absolutely not a single trace of it to be found in the New Testament. There are passages which may be reconciled with it, if the practice can only be proved to have existed, but there is not one word which asserts its existence. Nay, more; it

[1] Hippolytus and his Age, vol. ii. pp. 108, 9.

[2] Christian Theology, p. 494.

may be urged that 1 Corinthians, vii. 14 is incompatible with the supposition that infant baptism was then practiced at Corinth."[1]

The Abrahamic Covenant, making baptism come in the room of circumcision, used to be greatly relied upon. The two covenants, it was said, were substantially the same, and Romans iv. 11 was always adduced to prove that circumcision was, as baptism now is, "a seal of the righteousness of faith." In reply, Baptists were accustomed to point out that, 1. Circumcision was a seal or pledge of certain *temporal* blessings to all who rightly received it; but baptism is no seal or pledge of any thing of the kind. 2. Circumcision was not a sign or seal of *eternal life* to all who truly and properly received it; but baptism is. 3. Circumcision was to all the descendants of Abraham the sign, not of *their own* faith, but of the faith "which HE had," and all the blessings of which it was the seal flowed through the faith of another, *i. e.*, Abraham; while baptism is the symbol of our own faith, and none of the blessings of which it is the seal can flow to us otherwise than through this medium. It was because the first covenant was found faulty in these respects that a better covenant was established upon better promises.[2]

By degrees the whole doctrine of the Abrahamic Covenant has been given up by the ablest defenders of infant baptism. The contradictory views maintained in regard to it, even by the same writers, had long been pointed out before this took place. Thus, Matthew Henry, for example, in one place says that "*by baptism* we are *brought into* the covenant." In another place he insists that "baptism belongs to those *who are in that covenant* (at least by profes

[1] Aug. 1852, pp. 209, 10. [2] Heb. viii. 6–10.

sion) and to none other. The infants of believing parents are in covenant with God, and therefore have a right to the initiating seal." So as to church-membership; in one place he tells us that "baptism is an ordinance of Christ, *whereby* the person baptized is solemnly *admitted* a member of the visible church;" yet, in the same Treatise, he assures us that baptism "is an ordinance of the visible Church, and pertains therefore to those that *are* visible members; their covenant right and their church-membership entitleth them to baptism. Baptism doth not give the title, but *recognizes* it, and completes that church-membership which before was imperfect."[1] It is this obvious contradiction which, running through all the writings of the Congregationalist and Presbyterian defenders of this system, has silently caused it to lose its power on the more thoughtful advocates of this rite, from Coleridge to Dr. Hodge. Certain it is that the whole of the ground is given up, and admitted to be of no divine authority in favor of the system.

Perhaps no man's thoughts have more weight at this time than those of Coleridge.[2] After showing the error of inferring the title of infants to this rite from the cases of household baptism, he adds:

"Equally vain is the pretended analogy from circumcision, which was no sacrament at all, but the means and mark of national distinction. Circumcision was intended to distinguish the Jews by some indelible sign, and it was no less necessary that Jewish children should be recognizable as Jews than Jewish adults, not to mention the greater safety of the rite in infancy. Nor was it ever pretended that any

[1] Booth, Pedo. Examined, p. 173.

[2] Aids to Reflection: Article on Baptism.

grace was conferred with it, *or that the rite was significant of any inward or spiritual operation.*"

In his Notes on Jeremy Taylor,[1] he repeats these remarks in substance, adding: "This is clear, for the woman had no corresponding rite, but the same result was obtained by the various severe laws concerning their marriage with aliens, and other actions." This, it might, however, be said, was the language of a mere philosopher, not a fair representation of any ecclesiastical body of Christians. But when the Old School Presbyterians began to be attacked by the Episcopalians, who plead the analogy of circumcision and of the ancient Jewish church in favor of admitting good and bad into Christian churches, the "Princeton Review"[2] abandons the covenant of circumcision, and assumes so far Baptist ground. Dr. Hodge says: "It is to be remembered that there were two covenants made with Abraham. By the one, his natural descendants through Isaac were constituted a commonwealth, an external, visible community. By the other, his spiritual descendants were constituted a church. * * * There can not be a greater mistake than to confound the national covenant with the covenant of grace, and the commonwealth founded on the one with the Church founded on the other.

"When Christ came, the commonwealth was abolished, and there was nothing put in its place. The Church remained, * * * a spiritual society with spiritual promises, on the condition of faith in Christ. In no part of the New Testament is any other condition of membership in the Church presented than that contained in the answer of Philip to the eunuch, who desired baptism: 'If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered

[1] Works, vol. v. p. 186. Harper. [2] Oct. 1853, pp. 684, 685.

and said, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God.' The Church, therefore, is in its essential nature a company of believers, and not an external society requiring merely external profession as condition of membership." This language may fail to draw any distinction between the visible Churches and the invisible Church, yet the very confusion makes the completeness of his abandonment of circumcision as any authority for infant baptism, the more obvious.

Great stress used to be laid upon the cases of household baptism mentioned in Scripture, *i. e.* those of Stephanas,[1] the jailor,[2] and that of Lydia.[3] From these our Pedobaptist brethren have been in the habit of inferring the baptism of children as a part of some of these households. On the contrary, Baptists have contended that in the former two of these cases, we have proof that infants were not included in that term,[4] and that as to the case of Lydia, there is every probability there were none, from the circumstance of her being apparently a single woman in a strange city; while numerous other cases of devout or believing households[5] clearly show that infants were not embraced by such a term in instances like these.

In Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia is an article on Baptism, prepared by Professor J. Jacobi, at the request of Neander, and endorsed by him as "in unison with his own principles." Alluding to household baptism, as the "*strongest* argument" from Scripture for infant baptism, the writer says, however, that "in none of these instances has it been

[1] 1 Cor. i. 16. [2] Acts, xvi. 33. [3] Acts, xvi. 15.

[4] See 1 Cor. xvi. 15; Acts, xvi. 32 and 34.

[5] Such as those of Crispus, Acts, xviii. 8; the nobleman of Capernaum, John, iv. 53; Onesiphorus, 2 Tim. iv. 19; and that of Cornelius, Acts, x. 2.

proved that there were little children among them; but even supposing that there were, there was no necessity for excluding them from baptism in plain words, since *such an exclusion was understood as a matter of course.*"

Neander himself thus states his convictions on this point:[1] "We can not infer the existence of infant baptism from the instances of the baptism of whole families; for the passage, 1 Corinthians, xvi. 15, shows the fallacy of such a conclusion, as from that it appears that the whole family of Stephanus, who were baptized by Paul, consisted of adults."

Coleridge, however, in his comment on baptism,[2] has placed this matter in the strongest light:

"I must concede to you that too many of the Pedobaptists have erred. I have, I confess, no eye for these smoke-like wreaths of inference, this ever-widening spiral *ergo* from the narrow aperture of a single text, or rather an interpretation forced into it by construing an idiomatic phrase, in an artless narrative, with the same absoluteness as if it had formed part of a mathematical problem. I start back from these inverted pyramids, where the apex is the base. If I should inform any one that I had called at a friend's house, but had found nobody at home, the family having all gone to the play; and if he, on the strength of this information, should take occasion to asperse my friend's wife for unmotherly conduct in taking an infant six months' old to a crowded theatre, would you allow him to press the words 'nobody' and 'all the family' in justification of the slander? Would you not tell him that the words were to be interpreted by the nature of the subject, the purpose of the speaker, and their ordinary acceptation; and that he must or

[1] "Planting and Training of the Christian Church," book iii. chap. v. p. 101.

[2] Aids to Reflection, p. 319.

might have known that infants of that age would not be admitted into the theatre? Exactly so with regard to the words, '*he and all his household.*' Had baptism of infants at that early period of the Gospel been a known practice, or had this been previously demonstrated, then indeed the argument that in all probability there were infants or young children in so large a family, would be no otherwise objectionable than as being superfluous, and a sort of anti-climax in logic. But if the words are cited as the proof, it would be a clear *petitio principii*, though there had been nothing else against it. But when we turn back to the Scriptures preceding the narrative, and find repentance and belief demanded as the terms and indispensable conditions of baptism, then the case above imagined applies in its full force."

The circumstances of Christ blessing the little children[1] used to be brought forward as strongly favoring infant baptism. On the other hand, Baptists always contended that as we have three accounts of this transaction,[2] detailing all that *did* transpire, this occurrence *leaves no room* for the supposition that Jesus considered infants fit subjects for baptism. It was justly remarked by Jeremy Taylor, on this side two hundred years ago, that "From the action of Christ's blessing infants, to infer that they were baptized, proves nothing so much as that there is a want of better argument; for the conclusion would with more probability be derived thus: Christ blessed children and so dismissed them, but baptized them not, therefore infants are not to be baptized."

Olshausen, commenting on this passage, says: "Of that reference to infant baptism, which it is so common to seek

[1] Matt. xix. 13–15. [2] See Mark, x. 13–16, and Luke, xviii. 15–17.

in this narrative, there is clearly not the slightest trace to be found."

Even Doddridge, though advocating it in his remarks on this very passage, says: "I acknowledge these words will not of themselves prove infant baptism to be an institution of Christ."

Professor Jacobi speaks of the argument from this text as obsolete, and generally given up. "In support of it [infant baptism] the advocates in former ages *now hardly any* used to appeal to Matthew xix. 14." He appears to think it unworthy of further mention.[1]

1 Corinthians, vii. 14, was formerly considered one of the strongest proof-texts. Pedobaptists argued that here the children of believers were plainly spoken of as "made holy" by their connection with Christian parents, which, they inferred, could only be through baptism, and must be intended as an allusion to that ordinance. Baptists have generally urged that, by the same principle carried out, this passage would teach the baptism of every unconverted husband of a believing wife; and that, on the contrary, it plainly proves that the children of Christian parents were no more baptized, and had no closer connection with the Church than the unbelieving partners of Christians.[2]

In accordance with this latter view, Neander finds here a proof that at that time infant baptism was unknown to the Corinthian Church.[3] Or, as Professor Jacobi says in the article on baptism before quoted:

"A pretty sure indication of its non-existence in the apostolic age may be inferred from 1 Corinthians, vii. 14,

[1] Kitto's Bib. Ency. Art. Baptism.

[2] See Tracts on Important Subjects, No. 8, by Dr. Dagg.

[3] See Planting and Training, book iii. chap. 5.

since Paul would certainly have referred to the baptism of children for their holiness."

"The North British Review,"[1] arguing against the Popish doctrine of baptismal regeneration, says expressly:

"1 Corinthians, vii. 14, is incompatible with the supposition that infant baptism was then practiced at Corinth. The Apostle in this passage seeks to remove the scruples of those Christian partners in mixed marriages who believed that a conjugal union with a heathen was a state profane and unholy in God's sight. He reassures them by an argument founded on a *reductio ad absurdum*. You admit, says he, that your children are holy, then be persuaded that the marriage from which that sanctity was derived is holy also. For were it otherwise, if, as you imagine, the marriage is unholy, then it would follow that the children that are the fruits of it would be unclean and unholy also, whereas you know and admit the reverse. You confess them to be holy. It is absolutely indispensable for the validity of this argument that the sanctity of the children should have been *exclusively* derived from the sanctity of the marriage, for on no other hypothesis could the sanctity of the children have furnished a proof of the sanctity of the marriage. Had the children been baptized they would have been holy, in their own right, as members of Christ, and a father who had had his children baptized would have effectually demolished the Apostle's reasoning by the simple reply that the holiness of his children, as members of Christ's Church, was no reason for his thinking the marriage holy, or his not putting away his unbelieving wife. Many, indeed, have explained the term holy as meaning "have been admitted to baptism," making the verse say that if the faith of the believing part-

[1] August, 1852. Art. 3.

ner had not sanctified the marriage, the children would not have been admitted to baptism, whereas they had been baptized. *But this is to re-write Scripture, not to interpret it.*"

Thus, then, there is not a single clear scriptural argument in favor of infant baptism, not one but has been given up by several Pedobaptists, the most enlightened who have examined this subject within the last few years. *Proselyte baptism* used, however, to be strongly urged. The Jews, it was said, had a custom of baptizing all their proselytes, and if the head of a family was initiated, all the children were subjected to the same rite. Hence it was inferred that unless some distinct proof to the contrary could be shown, it must be taken for granted that the same rule was applied to the Christian as to the Jewish ceremony.

To this Baptists usually replied that even supposing this custom could be proved to extend back to apostolic times, the inference would not follow, owing to the utter difference of the two dispensations. The baptism of John, as one emphatically of repentance, could only have embraced adults. "Proselyte baptism," Augusti says, "included the children with the parents; John's baptism excluded both children and the female sex, forming the germ from which Christian baptism developed itself." This would effectually cut off any such inferential connection. But it is now admitted that there is no proof of the Jewish rite in question until two hundred years after the time of our Saviour. Much learning has been expended on this subject. Professor Jacobi says that the opinion that proselyte baptism was before Christian baptism "is not at all tenable," but that it was probably only a purifying ceremony. It was raised to the character of an initiatory and indispensable rite co-

ordinate with that of sacrifice and circumcision, only *after* the destruction of the Temple. Then sacrifices had ceased, and the circumcision of proselytes had, by reason of public edicts, become more and more impracticable."[1]

Such is the view, also, of Professor Stuart, who urges a still more decisive objection to this as any foundation for ordinary infant baptism, *i. e.*, that it certainly did not follow the rule of circumcision, never being administered to those children born after their parents became Jews. He, therefore, properly regards it as a surprising thing that this should be adduced in proof of infant baptism.[2]

§ III. Church History.

(*a.*) *The cause of its silence as to Infant Baptism.*

The great reliance of our Pedobaptist brethren has been upon Church History. It has been urged that, by its means at least, infant baptism could be clearly proved of apostolic origin, and that thus the very silence of the New Testament must have arisen from its being a matter of course. To this Baptists replied, that to call in the aid of tradition and history, was to give up the sufficiency and completeness of Scripture, and cut up by the root the great Protestant principle which makes the Bible our rule of faith. This, and more than this, Chevalier Bunsen fully admits:[3] "The Reformation appealed to Scripture alone, and accepted only with a general reserve the creeds of the councils, * * * yet the Reformation accepted Pedobaptism, *although its*

[1] Kitto, Art. Baptism.

[2] Art. on the Mode of Baptism, Biblical Repository, April, 1833, sec. 3.

[3] Hippolytus and his Age, vol. ii. pp. 104, 5.

leaders were more or less aware that it was neither scriptural nor apostolic."

Baptists, however, have had no objection impartially to examine the testimony of Church History, provided that, like that of all other witnesses, we were at liberty to cross-question it, where contradictory, and were not bound to receive every thing asserted, however improbable, as the final decisions of a judge in a court of law, or the Holy Scriptures. They contended that, if fairly examined, the earliest records of Ecclesiastical History were quite adverse to the idea of infant baptism being apostolic in its origin. Rather more than a hundred years ago Drs. Wall and Gale discussed the question in this spirit, with a degree of learning and ability that promised to exhaust the subject. But the death of Gale suddenly arrested it on his side; nor has it been continued since Dr. Wall left it, in England or America, except in a fragmentary manner Among the Germans, however, the fresh spirit of historical criticism awakened by Niebuhr, and his more judicious followers, has begun to throw the impartial light of history upon this vexed question.

The chief fault of Doctor Wall is one that he shared in degree with Bingham, *i. e.*, of supposing that because clear and undeniable traces of an institution might be found in the third and fourth centuries, therefore, it must be supposed to have existed in the first, except so far as its intermediate sources of development could be clearly and positively traced. This made all *the silence* of Church history favorable to the existence of any custom, however corrupt, which arose by such slow degrees as not to awaken immediate general opposition. In this case it threw on the Baptists the difficult task of proving a negative; and because they could not bring forward passages objecting against infant

baptism before it existed, it was supposed to be shown that these authors must all have acquiesced in, and approved of it.

But within the last fifty years a spirit of more careful historical criticism has prevailed; and it is now well ascertained that where a custom like infant baptism is supposed extensively to have existed, we shall be sure to find incidents or allusions to it in certain places in Church history, as soon as it really became current. If in the fifth century we have clear and frequent traces of a custom wide-spread and becoming universal, but fewer and fainter allusions to it in similar circumstances in the third, and none in the second or in Scripture, we have a right to infer that silence as strong evidence *against* the original prevalence, if not the existence, of the usage in question. It is thus that the origin of Ecclesiastical Councils may be traced. The absence of any protest against their authority in the first two centuries is the best proof, not of their universal recognition, in the ordinary government of the churches, but of the opposite. Their *rising* importance from the beginning of the fourth century, best shows that they were not at first a part of regular Church government. The same kind of silence in regard to infant baptism most effectually *disproves* its apostolic origin.

Doctor Bunsen, therefore, says,[1] "Pedobaptism, in the more modern sense, meaning thereby baptism of new-born infants, with the vicarious promises of parents or other sponsors, *was utterly unknown to the early Church, not only down to the end of the second, but indeed to the middle of the third century.*" The same writer considers that it must have been unknown to Irenæus and his disciple, Hippolytus, A.D. 220, but that "Cyprian was the first father who,

[1] Hyppolytus, vol. iii. p. 180.

impelled by a fanatical enthusiasm and assisted by a bad interpretation of the Old Testament, established it as a principle." Coleridge, indeed, writing about the year 1816, says, "I confine myself to the assertion—not that infant baptism was not—but that there is no sufficient proof that it was the practice of the Apostolic age."[1] The great inconsistency of this ground, is, that infant baptism is just that kind of institution which if it *had* existed must have given proofs of itself. It was not an insignificant or occasional, but a daily matter among the first Christians, if it occurred at all. It was either *universal* or *unknown*. Either a divine command perfectly understood and obeyed; or not a command at all. So much, at least, the silence of Scripture must be allowed to prove. If it existed at all it was *always* practiced; and then when the parents became Christians all their young children were baptized with them, or as soon as they were born. To suppose that all this could have existed without leaving proofs, one way or the other, is only a transition state of opinion. In the private notes of the same writer on the works of Robinson, there is this passage, "When the Baptist says: I think myself obliged to obey Christ scrupulously, and believing that he did not command infant baptism, but on the contrary, baptism under conditions incompatible with infancy (faith and repentance), therefore, I can not with innocence, because I can not in faith, baptize an infant at all, or an adult otherwise than by immersion, *I honor the man and incline to his doctrine as the more Scriptural*."[2]

The progressive weight of this kind of evidence on the mind of Neander is very traceable in the difference between

[1] Aids to Reflection, Aphorism on Baptism, note.

[2] Works, vol. v. p. 542. Harper.

the former and latter editions of the first volume of his Church History. At first (in 1825), he wrote thus:

"It is certain that Christ did not ordain infant baptism. We can not prove that the Apostles ordained it. From the deficiency of historical documents during the first half of this period we must also avow that the want of any positive testimony to the custom can not be brought as an argument against its antiquity."[1]

But in 1842, seventeen years later, the defects in the first edition appeared to Neander so glaring that he re-wrote nearly the whole. At the same place in the second edition he says:

"Baptism was administered at first only to adults, as men were accustomed to conceive baptism and faith as strictly connected. *We have all reason for not deriving infant baptism from Apostolic institution.*"[2]

In the second volume, alluding to the period from A.D. 312 to 590, after saying that in theory infant baptism was now generally esteemed an apostolical institution he carefully adds: "But from the theory on this point we can draw no inference with regard to the practice. It was still very far from being the case, especially in the Greek Church that infant baptism although acknowledged to be necessary, was generally introduced into practice: among Christians of the East, infant baptism, though in theory acknowledged to be necessary [to salvation], yet *entered so rarely and with so much difficulty* into the Church life during the first half of this period."[3]

Intermediate, chronologically between the first and second editions of his History, stands the publication of "The

[1] See Rose's Translation, vol. i. p. 166.

[2] Vol. i. p. 311. Torrey.

[3] Vol. ii. p. 319. Torrey.

Planting and Training of the Christian Church." And it is intermediate in the measure of its certainty as to the origin of infant baptism. "As baptism was closely united with a conscious entrance on Christian communion; faith and baptism were always connected with one another, and thus *it is in the highest degree probable* that baptism was performed only in instances where both could meet together, and that the practice of infant baptism was unknown at this period."[1]

Dr. Bunsen in "Hippolytus and his Times" thus sums up his own historical views of this question in one place:[2] "The difference, then, between the ante-Nicene and the later Church was essentially this: the later Church, with the exception of converts, only baptized new-born infants, and she did so on principle. The ancient [*i. e.*, ante-Nicene] Church, as a general rule, baptized adults, and only after they had gone through a course of instruction; and, as the exception, only Christian children who had not arrived at years of maturity, *but never infants.* Tertullian's opposition is to the baptism of young growing children. He does not say one word about new-born infants. Neither does Origen, when his expressions are accurately weighed. Cyprian and some other African bishops, his cotemporaries, at the close of the third century, were the first who viewed baptism in the light of a washing away of the universal sinfulness of human nature, and connected this idea with that ordinance of the Old Testament—circumcision."

He goes on to give the reasons why "the Church has been *dragged into this wrong path;*" and concludes by saying, "This is the consequence of the admission of an untruth. When the Church attached rights and promises of blessing

[1] Book iii. chap. 5. [2] Vol. iii. p. 194.

to any thing except to the conscious abandonment of sin, and to *the voluntary vow* of dedicating life and soul to the Lord, the consciousness of sin and the longing for real truthful reformation died away in the same proportion among her members."

Comparing ancient baptism with modern, he says,[1] "But if you look closely into the ecclesiastical condition of the two ages, are you not overpowered by one predominant feeling? And is not this the feeling that in the one age we find upon the whole, connection, reality, internal and external truth; in the other little else but patchwork and ruins, *shams* and phantoms? That in one case a real life was lived, a life of *freedom* as to the Church and as to the individual; that in the other conventionalism is fostered, or rather in most instances maintained by fire and sword, by the tyranny of State Churches, or by the unthinking superstition of habit? and that such a state of things is most ill-advisedly vaunted as possessing vitality, while it most impudently proclaims itself perfect and infallible.

"The ancient baptism comprised on Gospel grounds *four* spiritual elements—instruction, examination, the vow, the initiation. * * * Thus did the beggar enter into the communion of the faithful, thus the emperor when he ventured to do so. Constantine considered of it until his death-bed." "It is impossible but that this ceremony should have produced a great general impression, which was not diminished if the initiated were the child of Christian parents. The act was *his own* as much as it was in the case of a convert from heathenism. The very gradual advancement, even of the age of baptism in the case of children of Christian families, must have been injurious to its charac-

[1] Vol. iii. p. 201.

ter as a solemnity. We have already seen how, even before the close of our period, [A.D. 325] the baptism of new-born infants grew out of that of children advancing toward the age of boyhood. We have seen how, from the baptism of the spirit, which Christ instituted, people relapsed into ceremonial law, and fell back upon the shadow of a Jewish custom (circumcision) which had ceased to be binding with the extinction of the nation, and now was made a sanction for the religion of the new covenant of humanity.

"In consequence of this alteration and complete subversion of its main features, brought about principally by the Africans of the third century and completed by Augustine, these natural elements have been, in the course of nearly fifteen centuries, most *tragically decomposed, and nothing is now remaining any where but ruins.* In the East people adhered to immersion, although this symbol of man voluntarily and consciously making a vow of the sacrifice of self, *lost all meaning in the immersion of a new-born child.* The Eastern Church, moreover, practiced the unction immediately after the immersion, although that unction implies even more than immersion, man's full consciousness; and is to be the seal of a free pledge of a responsible act. Yet the Eastern Church requires, nevertheless, the general recognition of both as necessary to salvation, and denies there is any efficacy in the Western form of baptism.

"The Western Church evidently commenced her career under the guidance of Rome, with more freedom of thought. She abolished, together with adult baptism its symbol, immersion, and introduced sprinkling in its stead. She retained again unction (the chrisma) by way of confirmation, and separated the two acts."[1]

[1] Page 204.

Such overwhelming concessions and proofs of the truth of Baptist views, as to the unscripturalness of infant baptism, as abound in the subsequent pages of these volumes make it only astonishing that even with all the restrictions he would throw around it, Bunsen should advocate retaining it at all. He admits that it will appear strange, and even allows, that, in order to effect it, "in the first place the doctrine of *Biblical baptism must be reformed.*"[1] Thus, to accommodate the religious prejudices of the age, Biblical Christianity is to be modified, ay and "*reformed*" at pleasure! Thus Pedobaptism contains the germs of Popery, on the one hand, and of German skepticism on the other.

The "North British Review" not only concedes freely and repeatedly that "the *only* baptism known to the New Testament, was that of adults," on their profession of faith, but argues strongly from that, accounting for the early views of the connection of baptism with a state of salvation. Reviewing "Hippolytus and his Times" it remarks[2] in a note that "the correctness of the picture of ancient baptism, given by Dr. Bunsen, will not, we apprehend, be disputed by any one *who is content to accept the mere facts of the case*," and that it is "a subject on which they could have wished especially to dwell." They point the attention of the reader to what Dr. Bunsen has so clearly shown to be the animating principle of baptism, namely, "the thankful offering of the self-will to God," and significantly attempt to plead that "the question of the *validity* of infant baptism is one separated from that of its direct *apostolic authority*." Since, then, the animating principle and correct form are both confessedly wanting, but for the customs of early education it would be easier far to turn Quaker and

[1] Page 211. [2] May, 1853.

deny the obligation of any baptism, than admit the perpetuity of the command, and yet plead that it is fulfilled in such an emasculated rite as this.

Let any Christian read in Neander's life of Christ[1] the chapter on "The Church" and its object, let him mark its fundamental idea as there laid down, *i. e.*, a community founded on the principle of all its members being *absolutely subordinated in heart to God and Christ;*[2] and then consider the inevitable effect of admitting every infant of pious parents to its initiating rite. Let him bear in mind that the very idea, and even the name of the Church, are to be traced back to Christ himself, no less than a voluntary baptism as its initiatory rite, and then behold infant baptism sweeping, as it does, the world into the Church, and say if it at all realizes that conception. In fact the true question lying at the bottom of all this is, whether the Church is a divine institution. If so infant baptism radically alters it, and is therefore invalid.

(*b.*) *The Catechumenical system decisive.*

But it has not been merely the silence of early Church history that has disproved infant baptism. It has been clearly shown that there were other institutions among the early Christians utterly opposed to the bestowment of this rite on infants.

The catechumens of the Ancient Church were a body of persons composed entirely of such as were preparing for baptism by instruction and special prayer. They were at first something like the inquirers connected with many of our modern evangelical churches, and there is no doubt that the Methodist custom of anxious seats and classes of

[1] Book iv. part ii. chap. 4. [2] Page 124, Harper.

penitents was derived by Mr. Wesley, chiefly from reading the accounts of this order in the ancient congregations. Indeed the difference between them lies chiefly in two points: 1st. That as more attention was bestowed in the ancient classes, on *the facts* of Christianity, than is now done in our Bible classes, so by degrees *less* examination was made as to experimental piety. 2d. All the ancient catechumens were persons *preparing* for baptism (an ordinance originally regarded as the profession of regeneration, by degrees as its consummation, and in later times too often confounded with regeneration itself), while Mr. Wesley's anxious classes were supposed to be baptized persons, yet seeking regeneration by the spirit of God. The ancient catechumens, then, were unregenerate inquirers *out* of the Church; the modern catechumens were unregenerate inquirers *within*. The lines of demarcation were most rigidly drawn between the catechumens and the baptized, so that in Augustine's time, or as late as the year A.D. 400, the question "Is he *fidelis* or *catechumenus?*" meant the same thing as the inquiry, "Is he yet baptized or not?" as Wall shows. The catechumens sat in a specific part of the church, had special prayers offered for them, that they might become fit for the holy initiation, and were not allowed to remain even in the house of worship while the eucharist was celebrated. If one did so accidentally, he was to be immediately taken and baptized; or if one was supposed to be in danger of death, he was to be baptized, and if he recovered, the course of his religious instruction completed afterward, but still he was not called, or considered, or ranked as a catechumen.[1]

[1] Council of Laodicea, Can. 47, A.D. 361. The proof of all this is unquestionable. Any one can, however, easily verify it for himself, by con-

From the time of Tertullian, this order in Christian congregations may be considered to have been universal, and traces of it are found by Augusti as far back as A.D. 110. Regularly no person could be admitted to baptism, without being a catechumen. If there was danger of death, exception was made, but not otherwise. The ordinary period for remaining in this state of instruction, was three years, but where a person was *earnest* in his attendance and disposition, and well instructed in the history of Christ, and the doctrines of Christianity, he was admitted much sooner, often in a few months or weeks. But all had to be made catechumens first. Baptists have always contended that the children of pious parents were no exceptions to this rule; that by degrees they were often made nominal catechumens at a very early age, and frequently remained all their lives members of this class, being only baptized, like Constantine, just before death. Thus, Basil (A.D. 350), exhorting the catechumens to baptism, alludes to this, it is claimed when he says: "Do you demur and loiter and put it off, when you have been *from a child* catechised in the Word; are you not yet acquainted with the truth? *Having been always learning* it, are you not yet come to the knowledge of it? A seeker all your life long, a considerer till you are old. When will you become one of us."[2] Dr. Wall and others have denied that these youths could be children of Christians; but from that day to this, the priests of the Romish and of the Greek Churches have always gone through the form of first making every child of Christian parents a catechumen before they baptize it.

sulting "Bingham's Christian Antiquities," book i. chap. 3, and book x. generally. "Coleman's Christian Antiquities," chap. ii. sec. 5.

[1] Basil Oratio Exhort. ad Baptismum.

It would seem that the larger part of the catechumens addressed by Basil, had been made such in childhood. Hence they must have been the children of pious parents. Dr. Wall admits that when he first saw the above extract, he thought it "the strongest evidence against the general practice of infant baptism in those times." Baptists think so still. His supposition that so large a proportion of this body were the children of catechumens, seems to them out of all reason. Besides, they say when afterward infant baptism did prevail, as in the time of Justinian, A.D. 526, it was an established rule that on any adult becoming a catechumen, *his children were all baptized forthwith*; even while he remained in the preparatory state for two years.

In proportion as infant baptism became general, it reduced the catechumenical state to a merely nominal thing, but *the form* of it was still strictly adhered to, and has been ever since. In some Irish Church regulations, probably about the year A.D. 600, it is provided that the infants of Christians may be made catechumens on the eighth day, and that after that they can be baptized at any festival.[1] At

[1] The following is the present rule of the Romish Church: "The person to be baptized is brought or conducted to the church door, but forbidden to enter as one unworthy. * * * The priest then asks what he demands of the Church of God, and having received an answer, *he first instructs him catechetically* in the doctrine of the Christian faith, of which a profession is made in baptism. But as the catechetical form consists of question and answer, if the person to be instructed be an adult, he himself answers the interrogatories; if an infant, the sponsor answers according to the prescribed form, and enters into a solemn engagement for the child." Then follow the exorcism, salt, sign of the cross, spittle, renunciation, the oil of the catechumens, the profession of faith, and then the baptism. An adult is kept a catechumen for some months, but an infant is made a catechumen and baptized at once. (Cate-

an earlier period they were kept in this state till three or four years old, so that they might be taught to repeat at baptism some of the sacred words, as Gregory Nazianzen recommends.

It follows that the early churches all held it as a primitive truth that those born of Christian parents equally with others *needed instruction and the renunciation of sin before baptism could properly and regularly be administered.* This is precisely the Baptist theory and practice—the point on which they differ from all Pedobaptist Churches. Even Dr. Henry of New York, in his abridgment of Bingham's Ecclesiastical Antiquities, admits that "it is difficult to reconcile the practice of infant communion with the well-known custom of training the young for some time as catechumens before they were admitted either to baptism or the eucharist."[1] The whole practice of the Church from Augustine to Luther in making infants catechumens before baptism, is so far as it goes, the admission of a witness under cross-examination against his own prepossessions and prejudices, to the truth of Baptist views.

chism of the Council of Trent.) In the liturgy of the Greek Church, and indeed in all the liturgies, the "sealing" of infants as catechumens before their baptism is required. In Augustine's time, A.D. 400, whenever an infant was baptized, the sponsor replied to the questions in the name of the child, which an adult would have been taught to answer as a catechumen, just as now in the Greek and Roman churches. Boniface, in his correspondence with Augustine, is very much troubled at this, and represents others as objecting strenuously to it, and begs for some more solid reason in its favor, than the authority of the Church. "How can this," says Boniface "be reconciled to truth, which the sponsor answers in the child's name?" Augustine replies "You are wont to be exceedingly cautious of any thing that looks like a lie."

[1] Sec. 194.

In the fourth and fifth centuries the Churches were in a transition state. Two practices essentially contrary to each other prevailed—that of giving catechumenical instruction to children, and infant baptism. Both could not have belonged to primitive Christianity, for the two are in their very essence contradictory. Prior catechumenical instruction to the children of Christians never would have been thought of had infant baptism been a universal, or even a general custom when it arose. As when a scion, tall and vigorous, grows up from the side of an old trunk prostrate and rotten, we know that the ancient tree must have lived, decayed, and fallen before the young one began to grow, and overspread it with roots; so when we see infant baptism after the fourth century, waxing strong, becoming universal, trampling on catechumenical instruction and reducing it to a mere form, it is clear that this lifeless, prostrate, and decaying order must have existed, and become old, *before* infant baptism, as a system, took root in its sides, or to use Neander's expression, "entered into the Church life." Nor could the younger custom have swelled to the size it afterward assumed, and presumed to stretch its roots as they now lie across that more ancient system, until the catechumenical rank had been first upheaved and overthrown. Such, according to the Baptists, is the true view of the catechumenical system, such the proof it affords of the unscriptural origin of infant baptism.

Let us observe how far recent researches have sustained this view. A Mr. Coleman has done a good service to the churches in this country in condensing and translating from the works of Augusti on Christian Antiquities. The following extract contains in substance the results of that distinguished authority upon this subject.

"The general introduction of the rite of infant baptism has so far *changed* the regulations of the Church concerning the qualifications of candidates, and their admission, that what was formerly the rule in this respect has become the exception. The institutions of the Church during the first five centuries concerning the requisite preparations for baptism, and all the laws and rules that existed during that period, relating to the acceptance or rejection of candidates, necessarily fell into disuse, when the baptism of infants began not only to be permitted, but enjoined as a duty, and almost universally observed. *The old rule which prescribed caution in the admission of candidates, and a careful preparation for the rite* was, after the sixth century, applicable for the most part only to Jewish, heathen, and other proselytes. The discipline which was formerly requisite, preparatory to baptism, now followed this rite."[1]

The whole of this has been not only conceded but demonstrated by Dr. Bunsen[2] with remarkable clearness:

"The Apostolical Church made the school the connecting link between herself and the world. The object of this education was admission into the free society, and brotherhood of the Christian community. The Church adhered rigidly to the principle, as constituting the true purport of the baptism ordained by Christ, that no one can be a member of the communion of saints, but by *his own* free act and deed; his own solemn vow made in presence of the Church. It was with this understanding that the candidate for baptism was immersed in water and admitted as a brother upon his confession of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It understood, therefore, in the exact sense,

[1] Coleman's Christ. Antiq. chap. xiv. sec. 3.

[2] Hippolytus, vol. ii. pp. 179–181.

1 Peter, iii. 21, not as being a mere bodily purification but as a vow made to God with a good conscience through faith in Jesus Christ. This vow was preceded by a confession of Christian faith made in the face of the Church in which the catechumen expressed that faith in Christ and in the sufficiency of the salvation offered by Him. It was a vow to live for the time to come to God and for his neighbor, not to the world and for self; a vow of faith in his becoming a child of God, through the communion of His only-begotten Son, in the Holy Ghost; a vow of the most solemn kind, for life and for death. The keeping of this pledge was the condition of continuance in the Church, its infringement entailed repentance or ex-communication. All Church discipline was based upon this voluntary pledge, and the responsibility thereby self-imposed. But how could such a vow be received without examination? How could such examination be passed without instruction and observation?

"As a general rule the ancient Church fixed three years for this preparation, supposing the candidate, whether heathen or Jew, to be competent to receive it. With Christian children the condition was the same, except that the term of probation was curtailed according to circumstances. Pedobaptism in the more modern sense, meaning thereby baptism of new-born infants with the vicarious promises of parents or other sponsors, was utterly unknown to the early Church not only down to the end of the second, but indeed to the middle of the third century. We will show in a subsequent page how, toward the close of the second century, this practice originated in the baptism of children of a more advanced age."

Neander has shown the derangement produced in the

whole church service by the introduction of infant baptism destroying the more ancient rank of the catechumens.[1] Speaking of the period between Constantine and Gregory the Great (A.D. 312–590), says:

"With reference to the two constituent portions of the Church assemblies, the catechumens and baptized believers, the whole service was divided into two portions, one in which the catechumens were allowed to join, embracing the reading of the Scriptures and the sermon—the prevailingly didactic portion; and the other in which the baptized alone could take part, embracing whatever was designed to represent the fellowship of believers—the communion and all the prayers which preceded it. These were called the *missa catechumenorum and the missa fidelium, which division must of course have fallen into disuse after the general introduction of infant baptism.*"

The same author has shown from the ancient formularies, that they must have originated in a period of the history of the Church when infant baptism had no existence, but catechetical instruction preceded the initiatory rite.

Some of the questions and answers still preserved by the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches, or even by the Church of England, and other reformed communions, embalm, as it were, within their encrusted folds the dead figure of that which once had vitality, the formula of a believing catechumen applying for baptism. It is for this reason that the infant is still asked in these forms if he *desires* to be baptized; if he *renounces* the devil and all his works; if he *believes* all the articles of the Christian faith, and if he will *obediently* keep God's holy will and commandments. Neander[2] justly says of all this that it "originated in a period

[1] Church Hist. vol. ii. p. 325. [2] Vol. ii. p. 665.

when infant baptism had as yet no existence, and was afterward applied without alteration to children, because men shrunk from undertaking to introduce any change in the consecrated formula established by apostolic authority."

Let any one examine the work known as "The Apostolic Constitutions," containing as it does, formularies, enlarged indeed, and interpolated as late as the sixth century, but presenting, in the main, a fair picture of the Church in the third, and he will find the services they give for the administration of baptism to be for adults altogether, and not for infants, even while infant baptism is commended by them in one or two later passages.

Nothing is, therefore, more clear than that the whole ground on which the divine authority of infant baptism has been supposed, by our Pedobaptist brethren, for centuries to rest, has utterly given way and been abandoned, not only silently by large masses of evangelical Christians in the country, but openly and earnestly in argument by nearly all those persons of learning in Europe whose studies have led them impartially to examine the question in the light of the present age. Dr. Bunsen says "we are at this moment better able than either the defenders or opponents of infant baptism have hitherto been, to explain *how it originated.*"

§ IV. The Rise of Infant Baptism Traced.

Between thirty and forty years ago, when, in England and Scotland, Church history was under an eclipse even among respectable divines, Dr. Chalmers urged the following as a chief argument in favor of infant baptism:

"There is no satisfactory historical evidence of our practice having ever crept in—the innovation of a later period in

the history of the Church. Had infant baptism sprung up as a new piece of sectarianism, it would not have escaped the notice of the authorship of the times. But there is no credible written memorial of its ever having entered among us as a novelty, and we have, therefore, the strongest reason to believe that it has come down in one uncontrolled tide of example and observation from the days of the Apostles."[1]

Even Dr. Alexander tells us in his Life that he at one time gave up baptizing infants, but that this was one of those "considerations," which he says, "kept me back from joining the Baptists, *i. e.*, that the universal prevalence of infant baptism as early as the fourth and fifth centuries was unaccountable on the supposition that no such practice existed in the times of the Apostles."[2]

It is just here that the historical researches of impartial Pedobaptists, within the last half century, have so fully substantiated all that the Baptists had claimed.

[1] Lecture xiv. on Romans.

[2] The other consideration was that "if the Baptists are right, they are the only Christian Church on earth, and all other denominations are out of the visible Church. Besides I could not see how they could obtain a valid baptism." The sentiment of the former clause of this sentence has been considered in my little work on Communion. As to the latter Dr. Alexander should have been aware that the Roman Catholic Church has ever held that "the minister of baptism, in case of necessity, is the first person who passes by having the use of his reason of whatever sex or *religion*," and that this necessity even needs not to be extreme, but it is sufficient for it to be reasonable. (Dens. Theol. De Baptismo, n. 12, 3, 4.) So that Dr. Alexander's scruples were ultra High Church, and tending even beyond the Church of Rome itself, to make the validity of the sacraments depend on apostolic succession. There is no possibility of any Protestant or Papist now assuring himself that there is no defective link in his chain of succession, on Dr. Alexander's principles

Now, for instance, it is conceded by the most respectable authorities, that Justin Martyr (A.D. 140) could have known nothing of infant baptism. As Semler says, "From Justin Martyr's description of baptism we learn that it was administered only to adults. He says 'we were, corporally, born without our will, κατ' αναγην, but we are not to remain children of necessity and ignorance (as to our birth), but in baptism are to have choice, knowledge, etc. This we learned from the apostles.'"

It seems astonishing that persons could ever have thought otherwise concerning this most important Christian writer, for not only here have we this distinct assertion that in baptism we must have "choice" and "knowledge," but in his first apology presented to the emperor, he undertakes at length to relate the manner in which we, "having been renewed by Christ, dedicate ourselves to God" in baptism. He says that those who "*are persuaded and believe the things taught by us are true* and promise to live according to them," after praying and fasting and asking God to forgive them are "conducted by us to some place where there is water," and that "they are then bathed in water (εν τότε λουτρὸν ποιοῦνται) in the name of the Lord-God, the Father of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit."

Neander therefore says that Irenæus, A.D. 180, is *the first* Church teacher in whom we find any allusion to infant baptism, and quotes from that father the following well-known passage: "He came to redeem all by himself, all who through him are regenerated to God, infants, little children, boys, young men and old. Hence he passed through every age, and for the infants he became an infant, sanctifying the infants—among the little children he became a little child."[1]

[1] Church History, vol. i. p. 311.

This is now confessed to be the only shadow of reason for supposing that infant baptism was ever known until a period much later than the year 200, certainly. But here, all turns upon the meaning of the phrase "regenerated to God" in the above. If it means "baptize," then infant baptism was practiced in the year A.D. 180; if not, all proof of it at this period falls to the ground. It is not the duty of the author to offer an opinion either way, but simply to record those of others. But there is certainly no *proof* that the custom had then originated, especially as we have not the original, but only a Latin translation of later date. Dr. Sears and Dr. Chase have endeavored to show that Irenæus "generally employs the word 'regeneration' to designate the general work of Christ in redeeming the human race," and hence that there is here no ground for believing that in his time infant baptism had been introduced.[1] But as both of these are Baptists, it would be contrary to the object of this volume to quote their arguments. Dr. Sears, however, refers to Baumgarten—Crusius, Winer, Rossler, and Munscher, all German authorities of high rank, and who, though not Baptists, deny that any thing in Irenæus proves the existence of infant baptism. Dr. Krabbe declares that this passage "will hardly bear criticism," and Dr. Bunsen is decidedly of this opinion.

If this be so, we have no allusion to the baptism of infants, at any rate until after the beginning of the third century of the Christian era. Let any one think of the changes two hundred years have wrought in the customs and opinions of Christians in New England, and then say if two thousand years hence, because some antiquarian should read in

[1] See Christian Review, vol. iii. p. 206. Chase's Design of Baptism, pp. 67–85

a work of this day, of churches fitted up with gas and baptistries, organs, and choirs, that therefore he would justly infer that choirs, organs, gas, and baptism by immersion, were all known and approved by the Pilgrim Fathers.

We now come down to Tertullian, A.D. 200, who strongly *protests against* the baptism of young persons. But it has generally been taken for granted by Pedobaptists, that he was arguing against *infant* baptism in the strict sense of the word, and hence they have urged that he must have been well acquainted with the system, that this opinion was but that of an individual, while his opposition proves the prevalence of the custom. Neander, however remarks on his testimony: "Tertullian appears as a zealous opponent of infant baptism, a proof that the practice had not as yet come to be regarded as an apostolical institution, for otherwise he would hardly have ventured to express himself so strongly against it. * * * He says, '*Let them first learn to feel their need of salvation, so it may appear that we have given to those that wanted.*' Tertullian evidently means," continues Neander, "that children should be led to Christ by instructing them in Christianity, but that they should not receive baptism until after having been sufficiently instructed, they are led from personal conviction, and by their own free choice to seek for it with the sincere longing of the heart."[1]

But Bunsen shows that Tertullian was not arguing against *infant* baptism at all, then unknown, but of "little growing children from six to ten years old," who could "go down with the other catechumens into the baptismal bath, but were not yet in a state to make the proper responses." The custom was coming into fashion, but Tertullian "rejects" it,

[1] Church History, vol. i. p. 312.

quoting the well-known passage,[1] as follows: "For it is desirable to postpone baptism according to the position and disposition of each individual, as well as in reference to his age, but especially so in the case of children. Where is the necessity for placing the sponsors in jeopardy, who may be prevented by death from performing their promises, or may be deceived by the breaking out of an evil disposition. It is true that our Lord said, "Hinder them not from coming unto me," but they may do so when they have arrived at the age of puberty, they may do so when they have begun to learn, and have learned to whom they are going. Why should they at that innocent age hasten to have their sins forgiven them? Ought we to act with less circumspection than in worldly matters, and allow those who are not intrusted with earthly property to be intrusted with heavenly? Whoever attaches to baptism the importance it deserves, will be afraid rather of being too hasty than too procrastinating. True faith is sure of salvation." This, continues Bunsen, "is the way in which Tertullian treats the subject of baptism of growing children. What would he have said to the application of Christ's words to the case of infants?"[2]

There is no proof, then, of a single case of infant baptism up to the close of the second century.

Origen, A.D. 230–250, speaks indeed of an apostolical tradition to give baptism even to little children [parvulis], but Neander justly remarks in regard to this declaration, that it is "an expression which can not have much weight in this age, when the inclination was so strong to trace every institution which was considered of special importance, to the Apostles, and when so many walls of separation, hindering the freedom of prospect, had already been set up between

[1] De Baptismo, c. 18. [2] Hippolytus, vol. iii. p. 194.

this and the apostolic age." The same author also shows that "in Origen's time, too, difficulties were frequently urged against infant baptism, similar to those thrown out by Tertullian," and that we are not to infer from any single expressions of this kind, that it was ever in customary use, but to remember that long after infant baptism "was acknowledged in theory, it was still very far from being uniformly recognized in practice."[1]

But Bunsen fully explains the cause of this reference to apostolical tradition, showing that it simply alludes to the verse "Suffer the little children [parvuli] to come unto me," and from the passage before quoted, that in both of these cases, the reference is to "*little growing children from six to ten years old.*"[2]

"Tertullian's opposition is to the baptism of young growing children; *he does not say one word about new-born infants. Neither does Origen, when his expressions are accurately weighed.* Cyprian, and some other African bishops,

[1] Vol. i. p. 314.

[2] "This, then, is also the true interpretation of this and of the other two passages in Origen where the same word occurs. A comparison with what appears to have been considered apostolical tradition before the time of Origen, *shows that no other interpretation is admissable.* The Text Book speaks of *those who go down with the other catechumens into the baptismal bath, but are not yet in a state to make the proper responses.* In that case, the parents are bound to do it for them. This is undoubtedly the "apostolical practice to which Origen refers, for it was to the Church of Alexandria that he particularly belonged. In this ordinance the whole arrangement seems to be an exceptional one, and so it is in Origen, for he says the "little ones *also.*" When the Church instituted Pedobaptism (in the sense of children from six to ten years of age), she doubtless had before her eyes our Lord's affectionate words referred to likewise by Origen on the occasion, and the divines of the sixteenth century soor found themselves obliged to revert to them." Hippolytus, vol. iii. pp. 192, 39.

his cotemporaries, at the close of the third century, were the first who viewed baptism in the light of a washing away of the universal sinfulness of human nature, and connected this idea with the ordinance of circumcision."[1]

By Cyprian the rightfulness of infant baptism was urged on the people, upon the ground of circumcision, which argument was at about this time first introduced. But these views were then confined to the clergy of North Africa, where infant baptism originated in the manner which Neander has shown. Speaking of the period from Tertullian to Cyprian, he says:

"The error became more firmly established, that without external baptism no one could be delivered from that inherent guilt, could be saved from the everlasting punishment that threatened him, or raised to eternal life; and when the notion of a magical influence, or charm connected with the sacraments, continually gained ground, the theory was finally evolved of the unconditional necessity of infant baptism. About the middle of the third century this theory was already generally admitted in the North African Church. The only question that remained was whether the child ought to be baptized immediately after its birth, or not till eight days after, as in the case of the rite of circumcision."[2]

And yet it is certain that, after the middle of the fourth century, the baptism of Augustine, the son of the pious Monica, was put off in his childhood, under circumstances that Augusti considers to show that his baptism, with so little preparation, "would have been an exception to the general rule on this subject."[3]

All kinds of superstitions and ceremonies rapidly accumu-

[1] Hipolytus, vol. iii. p. 195. [2] Church History, vol. i. p. 313.
[3] Coleman's Christian Antiquities, chap. 2, sec. 5.

lated around infant baptism in proportion as the custom gradually extended; for some of the details of which the curious may consult "Hart's Ecclesiastical Antiquities," and similar works. At length, in Ireland, the land of saints, every father baptized his own child, as soon as it was born, in *milk*, that it might be mild in disposition, immersing the whole body, except always the right arm, "*that he might be strong in war.*" From the time of Cyprian, infant communion spread side by side with infant baptism; and we find revolting details of children made sick by the bread and wine forced into their mouths. This continued several centuries. So late as A.D. 957, Elfric, in his address to the priesthood in England, says: "Ye should give the eucharist to children when they are baptized, and let them be brought to mass that they may receive it all the seven days that they are unwashed."[1] Thus is the origin and progress of this error clearly traceable from the most authentic Pedobaptist sources.

One thing alone remains to be accounted for. Whence, in so spiritual a religion as Christianity, came this superstitious reverence for the ordinances of religion? Even this it is not difficult to trace. Our Saviour insists much upon *the confession of Him before men.* The disposition to do this, in whatever way he may choose to make known his will, even at the cost of life, he makes an essential part of Christian character. But in practical life *the disposition* to confess can only be proved by the act of confession. Hence baptism, as the public avowal of Christ, came very early to be considered essential to being "a *complete*" or "*perfect* Christian." The multitudes who delayed it on account of persecution increased this tendency; while the

[1] Hart's Ecclesiastical Records, p. 188.

decision of character, and consequent peace it gave to those who embraced it, probably helped to foster the superstition that by degrees attached to the mere act itself. Soon, therefore, the former sins were not thought to be generally washed away until the moment of baptism, however manifest the faith in Christ before. Thus it came to be esteemed essential to salvation, not indeed without faith, but when accompanied by it, mystically washing away all sins up to the moment of its administration. Hence, too, sins after baptism were forgotten by the Church with difficulty. Thus came the common delay of multitudes of men to be baptized till just before death, as was the case with Constantine. Then the counteracting zeal of the Church was awakened. Pious parents first encouraged their children to place themselves as catechumens *very early* in life, and then the parents placed them as such at six or seven, and even earlier. At the close of the second, and all through the third and fourth centuries, there were increased classes of children catechumens. But these children, if allowed to wait until they grew up, would still, in superstitious dread of sins committed after baptism, defer that rite until a deathbed, as the exhortation of Basil, already quoted (A.D. 379) shows.

Hence the clergy, in a mistaken zeal to multiply members, and dreading lest a rite, to which so much importance was now attached, should be delayed for a precarious deathbed, encroached with their baptism, as they easily could through their influence over the flexible minds of the children catechumens, aided by the blind zeal of parental piety, earlier and earlier into the years of childhood. From boys of ten, who might sometimes be volunteers, and possibly give evidences of sincere piety, they advanced to take in those of six or seven responded for by others, though able to descend

unaided into the water with the adult catechumens. Then those of three or four, when just able to repeat a few of the sacred words, as Gregory Nazianzen recommends, were, by a further corruption, brought by baptism into the fold of the Church. From this very circumstance would arise the strongest argument for going a step further. For, since in these very young children baptism could not be a profession of personal faith, it could only lead the masses to suppose that it acted as a charm, and that the child was made *more safe* in case of death, a view carefully cherished by the clergy. Thus arose the belief that *all*, even infants, dying without baptism, would be lost; and hence followed finally the baptism of babes of eight days old, and even those of a day. The first *known* instance of this last is A.D. 252, in North Africa, but it was by "slow degrees only, and with much difficulty, that all this entered into the Church life," until after the year 400, as Neander has shown. Down to the middle of the fourth century, many, like Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, and Augustine, whose parentage would have rendered infant baptism certain had it been usual, were not baptized till they became adults, even where dedicated to God most solemnly by parental piety in their infancy, "like Samuel." The concessions of such authorities as Augusti, Neander, Bunsen, and a host of others, fully sustain this view of the origin of infant baptism and its efficacy.

To most Christians, indeed, the chief difficulty will be to understand how those who concede so much concede no more; how they can give up the Divine authority of infant baptism and yet retain the practice. After making all allowance for early associations and the difficulty and dread of cutting the Church loose from a system time-honored and

remote, this must still be considered a humiliating fact. The masses of those who continue to practice it, do so because *they* regard it as most unquestionably a Divine institution. They draw inferences from it of the most objectionable theological character, because they so esteem it. Surely those who know better, and who perceive these dangers, should not content themselves with protesting against the inferences, but should abandon what they own to be the unscriptural practice, from which these are so naturally drawn.

§ V. Decrease of Infant Baptism.

It only remains that we now trace the progress, during the last hundred years, of Anti-Pedobaptist views among the masses of the Christian people—among those, in fact, who, guided chiefly by the New Testament and conscience, have, after great conflict with early prejudices, adopted the baptism of believers as alone scriptural, or at least relinquished that of infants as erroneous and injurious.

In Prussia, where the Baptists have suffered much persecution, it has been proposed recently, by many of the clergy, to do away with the requirement of *infant* baptism to membership in the National Church. There are now in Germany more than five thousand Baptist members, with about four hundred and fifty preaching stations, and about sixty preachers to supply them, under the care of the American Baptist Missionary Union. About seven hundred were baptized in 1854. In addition to this are the Mennonites, and others known in history.

In England the increase of the Baptist denomination, though regular and satisfactory, has presented no very remarkable national results of late years at home. But the

success of their missions abroad, together with their zeal in circulating translations of the sacred Scriptures, have given a degree of currency and power to Baptist sentiments, throughout India, which it is not easy to estimate, but far beyond what now appears from the numbers baptized. In the West Indies are some of the largest Baptist Churches in the whole world. In Scotland, though increasing, the Baptists are few, so few, indeed, that the organ of the Free Church has not feared publicly to admit the unscriptural character of infant baptism, to the extent that we have seen.

But it is in this country, where religion is most free, that the change has been the most steady and decisive. Ever since 1790, a tide of emigration has been coming in from Europe: very few, comparatively, have been Baptists. Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Methodists, have all received greater accessions in this way. Had the Baptists kept up in proportion to the increase of population, it might have seemed as much as could have been expected. But there were in the United States—

In 1792, about	1	Baptist	communicant	to	every	56	inhabitants.
In 1812, "	1	"	"	"	"	38	"
In 1832, "	1	"	"	"	"	33	"
In 1854, "	1	"	"	"	"	30	"

In addition to this, there are many Freewill Baptists, Mennonites, and Campbellites, making the proportion of 1 communicant to every 22 of the whole population belonging to churches which reject infant baptism. They have also ministers and accommodations for upward of 3,500,000, out of about 14,000,000, the whole Church accommodation of the United States; or *more than one quarter of the whole.*

It is not, however, from statistics of this kind that a full

idea of the progress of Baptist principles is to be gathered. We all know that infant baptism has been greatly falling into disuse among all evangelical denominations. Perhaps this decline has been the greatest among the Methodists. But they appear to preserve no statistics of their baptisms as a denomination, none certainly in their general annual reports: a fact which in itself shows its uselessness in their sight, and incongruity with their evangelical principles.[1] Occupied intently with the one great truth of regeneration by the Spirit, and not originally considering themselves a Church, but only a voluntary Society *in* a Church, the principle of their foundation has had a stronger hold upon them than even the teachings of their founder. Hence they now appear to welcome those who believe in infant baptism, or baptism only on a profession of faith. Their Book of Discipline, it is true, would bind them to receive none who do not "promise to observe and keep the rules of the Church," of which infant baptism is one. But, practically, none are refused admission simply for neglecting this rite. Among Episcopalians, on the other hand, their strongly ritual tendencies at the present day render the number of their infants baptized out of all proportion to their actual communicants.

[1] It is not a hundred years ago since John Wesley, defending infant sprinkling, wrote: "By baptism we enter into covenant with God into that everlasting covenant which he hath commanded forever, * * * are admitted into the Church, and consequently made members of Christ as its Head. * * * We who were by nature children of wrath are made children of God; * * * and if children then heirs with God, and joint heirs with Christ." (Wesley's Miscellaneous Works, vol. ii. pp. 157, 8.) None of our Methodist brethren would use such language now. The drawings of a higher and more spiritual regeneration have silently absorbed their interest from this rite.

They baptize the infants of the whole congregation, but even for this the proportion is very large, being about forty thousand reported to the last General Convention where their whole Church accommodation in the United States is but six hundred and forty-four thousand five hundred and ninety-eight, being just one infant baptized for every sixteen persons, that their Churches will seat. The Episcopalians, however, are but a small denomination, confined chiefly to cities, and less fairly represented by the numbers their edifices will seat than any others except, perhaps, the Roman Catholics.

Among the Congregationalists, while their last "Year Book" is a most valuable document, and shows clearly their prosperity in many points of view, it gives no statistics of infant baptism, but in place of them the following resolution:

"*Voted*, That a committee of three be appointed to ascertain the existing facts in reference to the baptism of infants in our churches, to inquire after the causes of the neglect of infant baptism, and to present a report at the next meeting of the body."

More significant, however, if indeed there is not some omission of the printer, is a confession of Faith of the Congregational Association of Minnesota, published at page 264, of this work, the thirteenth article, reading as follows:

"ART. 13. We believe that the sacraments of the New Testament are baptism and the Lord's supper, that believers of regular Church standing only can consistently partake of the Lord's supper, *and that visible believers be admitted to the ordinance of baptism.*"

Nor is there a word in favor of infant baptism. In a recent number of the "Journal of Commerce," the Boston correspondent chronicles it as quite a marked event in that

city, that "three infants were baptized" on the previous Sabbath, and adds:

"In our Congregational Churches we fear that there is considerable indifference and neglect in reference to infant baptism. In one of our oldest churches in this State there had not been, a few years since, an instance of infant baptism for the seven preceding years. Last year there were seventy Congregational Churches in New Hampshire tha reported no infant baptism. This year ninety-six churches, or about one half in the State, report none. If this indifference continues the ordinance will become extinct in the Congregational Churches."

We have heard it rumored that in a church near New York upward of fifty have "*joined under written protest*" against that rite. The following more cautiously worded acknowledgment of the same facts is made in an editorial which recently appeared in the "New York Independent," a paper that boasts of twenty thousand subscribers, and is edited by several leading Congregational ministers:

"In some cases it is affirmed that this neglect has spread so widely, and has become so habitual in the absence of a pastor, or through his tacit consent to the omission, that the instances of baptism among the children of Church members are *the exception rather than the rule*, and that the efforts to revive it meet with coolness or opposition. The members of such churches doubt the propriety of administering the ordinance to any but adults and in their own practice conform to their convictions."

The reasons assigned for this neglect are, if possible more significant than the facts, proving how essentialy extraneous to evangelical religion is the whole system.[1]

[1] "We can not particularly blame this when we reflect how slight a

The Reformed Dutch Church, according to its statistics in 1853, baptized one infant to every fifteen and one fifth communicants.

Perhaps the Presbyterians have maintained the discipline of their Church more thoroughly than most other denominations for a series of years, and preserved their records with more care. But unfortunately there are no statistics back of the year 1827 that will enable us to determine the progress or decline of infant baptism among them. In that year the number of infants baptized was already *fewer* than the number of adults received on a profession of religion, being in the following proportion in the years stated. In

1827	there were	10	infants sprinkled to	12	added on	examination.	
1828	"	10	" "	15	"	"	
1829	"	12	" "	14	"	"	

Indeed if we take all their baptisms, both of adults and infants together, for the three years above, they barely exceed the number of those received into communion, being only in the proportion of forty-three to forty-two.[1]

For twenty years the whole number of their baptisms of adults and infants put together have probably but little exceeded the number of their admissions on a profes-

place this ordinance has had in either the doctrinal expositions or the forms of religious worship common among our churches. Frequently the baptized child is treated, from first to last, by his parents, by the minister, by the church itself, which stand around him at his baptism, precisely as if no such rite had been administered; while the service itself, as we have said, is sniffed out of sight with a hasty observance that as nearly as possible intimates contempt for it."—*New York Independent, September*, 1854.

[1] See Appendix A.

sion of faith. In some years they have sunk much below. For instance, there were in

1832 13 infants, or 22 infants and adults, to 34 added on examination.
1833 14 " 21 " " " 23 " " "

These figures, however, are less to be relied on because there are in all churches seasons of revival when large numbers are admitted, and seasons of declension in which ordinances may be maintained with regularity, while but few make a profession of personal piety. But the general result shows that the decline of infant baptism among them must be very great.

A fairer way of examining statistics of this kind is to take the per centage of infant baptisms to the whole body of the communicants. The following are the results of such an estimate. In

1827 1 infant was baptized to every $13\frac{1}{5}$ communicants.
1828 1 " " " " $13\frac{3}{5}$ "
1829 1 " " " " $13\frac{1}{3}$ "

At this period, therefore, it would seem that the average yearly number of baptisms was about one to thirteen and one third. But in 1837, ten years later, and just before the division of the Church into its two present organization of old and new school, the proportion of infant baptisms to the number of the communicants was one to eighteen and four fifths. This would indicate a very rapid decline.

The old school Presbyterians have always been more conservative than the new, especially of observances like this. Hence, in the year 1839, after the separation was complete, the statistics indicate some temporary check to this decrease among them, and there was one infant baptism to

sixteen and three fifths communicants. But in 1853, it had fallen, in the old school branch of the denomination alone, to one in eighteen and four fifths, and in 1854 to one in eighteen and seven tenths.

The statistics of the new school branch began in 1838, and exhibit one baptism to twenty-two and seven tenths of the communicants. This, however, had fallen in 1853, the last year of which we have seen statistics, to one in thirty-four and seven tenths! That is, where in 1827 there were ten baptisms to every one hundred and thirty-five communicants, in 1853 there are four baptisms to every one hundred and forty communicants!

But if we add, as we ought to do in an estimate of the whole period, the tables of the old and new school bodies together, then the infant baptisms have decreased in seventeen years from one in thirteen and one fifth to one in twenty-two and three tenths.

Or to make the matter more palpable, supposing that in 1827 every Presbyterian infant was duly baptized, it would follow that now one hundred and fifty-two thousand seven hundred and ninety-two of their members were living in neglect of that ceremony. So that the practice has decreased among them *about one half* in twenty years.

Let us next multiply the number of communicants by *four*, and it will give us fairly the whole amount of men, women, and children, belonging to strictly Presbyterian families, just as the census would take them, and coming within the scope of infant baptism as now generally administered. This would give a population of one million four hundred and thirty eight thousand eight hundred and sixty in 1853.

The last census returns give one birth in the year to

every thirty-three inhabitants, but these are admitted to be quite defective. In Boston, indeed, the increase has been found to be about *one* to every *twenty-six*. In England and Wales the average has been considered about one birth to every thirty-one inhabitants, and in this country the increase is larger. But according to this estimate there were forty-six thousand four hundred and fourteen Presbyterian children born, less than *one third* of whom, fifteen thousand six hundred and seventy-six, were baptized. But the Prussian returns give one birth to every twenty-six inhabitants. This would give about fifty-five thousand births, of whom about forty thousand are unbaptized.[1]

And further, a hundred years ago it was not only the serious Presbyterians who had their infants sprinkled, but as now in Scotland even the most worldly. Many who rarely set foot in a church of any kind, would yet bring their children forward.

There is still another clearer method of exhibiting the decrease of infant baptism. By the late census the whole church accommodation of this country for all those denominations who baptize infants, is ten million six hundred and fifty-eight thousand six hundred and thirty-one, of which the

[1] The average of births is exceedingly hard to estimate. The registration of them in England and Wales has ever been, and probably now is, below the truth. There, the population has about doubled in the last fifty years, in spite of war, emigration, and deaths. In Prussia there were, according to an account before me in 1849, six hundred and ninety-one thousand five hundred and sixty-two births to sixteen million three hundred and thirty-one thousand one hundred and eighty-seven population, or one birth to twenty-three and three fifths. The statistical reports of Prussia seem to me the most reliable. If we suppose the births to be one in twenty-six in Prussia, the estimated average, they are probably not less than one in twenty-five in this country.

Presbyterians have two million seventy-nine thousand six hundred and ninety. If, then, they baptized in 1853 fifteen thousand six hundred and seventy-six, and all other Pedobaptist denominations in the same proportion, it would give, as the total number of infants sprinkled in the United States in that year, about eighty thousand. Supposing the population that year to have been twenty-five millions, there would have been, according to the English tables, eight hundred thousand children born to eighty thousand baptized. But by the Prussian tables, upward of nine hundred and sixty thousand children were born, that is, *more than twelve infants born to one baptized, by all denominations, the whole country through.*[1]

In one sentence, then, infant baptism is now completely the exception where it used to be the rule. If the Presbyterian returns furnish a fair average, out of twelve infants born, eleven go unbaptized. A hundred years ago the proportions were nearer the reverse. [Appendix B.]

CHAPTER V.

IMMERSION ALWAYS THE BAPTISM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

In the year 1841 Bishop Smith of the Episcopal Church in Kentucky was publicly declared by his own brethren to be the author of a letter in the "Church Record," saying

[1] The Roman Catholics, as well as the Episcopalians, baptize a larger proportion of their infants than the Presbyterians. But the first named are only to the Methodists as six to forty-three, estimated by church accommodations; and these last as well as the Congregationalists are far more lax in this matter than the Presbyterians.

that he and many of his western brethren were "constrained to admit immersion to have been *semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*," and as "being exceedingly galled by the *argumentum ad hominem*—if you believe in immersion, why do you not practice it; or, at least, why do you not yourself submit to it?" To this last question, which he confesses to have been "often posed with," he "*knows of no answer*" but the want of a succession of immersed administrators in the Episcopal Church. "How enviable," he continues, "is the position of the Greek and Asiatic Churches! And how deeply to be deplored the condition to which Protestantism is reduced by this [sprinkling] among the many other departures from the Catholic Church, of the great Roman schism!"

Afterwards, in a letter published by his "leave, and under his own proper signature," he says: "I do fully and unhesitatingly believe that no instance either of adult or infant baptism occurred during the first three centuries except by immersion, save only in the few cases of clinic baptism, and that to this practice all the incidental notices of Holy Scripture best conform." He believes that "God in his wise providence has permitted the rise of the various sects of Baptists for the purpose of ultimately restoring the primitive mode of baptism."

Dr. Anthon of Columbia College declares that "the primary meaning of the word βαπτίζω is to *dip*, or *immerse*, and its secondary meanings, if ever it had any, all refer in some way or other to the same leading idea. *Sprinkling*, etc., are entirely out of the question."

If from the Episcopal Church we turn to the Presbyterian, we can not forget that Dr. Campbell declared, about fifty years ago, that the word βαπτίζειν, both in sacred au-

thors and in classical, signifies *to dip*, *to plunge*, *to immerse*, and that "it *is always* construed suitably to this meaning."

We are not aware of a single writer of Church History who has expressed a doubt on this point. Neander says that, "In respect to the form of baptism, it was in conformity with the original institution, and the original import of the symbol, performed by immersion as a sign of entire baptism into the Holy Spirit, and of being entirely penetrated by the same."[1] Mosheim declares that in the first century "baptism was administered in convenient places, without the public assemblies, and by immersing the candidate wholly in water."[2]

Among the Germans, where the controversy has not been much agitated, this concession is most freely made. Winer, Tholuch, Hhan, Augusti, and many others, say, as Jacobi says,[3] "the whole body was immersed in water."

To this it must be added that the Greek Church does now, and always has, required immersion, holding that nothing else can be baptism. As Professor Stuart says:

"The mode of baptism by immersion the Oriental Church has always *continued* to preserve, even down to the present time. * * They maintain that *βαπτίζω can mean nothing but immerge*."[4]

Even the Roman Catholics frequently urge it as a decisive argument against all Pedobaptist Protestants, that they do not immerse; arguing that sprinkling is only a substitute introduced on the authority of the Church, and that originally baptism was by immersion alone. In fact, the vast preponderance of evidence of all Christians, even of

[1] History, vol. i. p. 310.
[2] Eccl. History, cent. 1. part ii. chap. 4.
[3] Kitto's Cyc. Art. Baptism.
[4] Bib. Repos. April, 1833, p. 360.

those practicing infant baptism, is most decisively in favor of all the baptisms of Scripture having been by immersion. And Professor Stuart, as we shall see, admits that there is not a single case in the New Testament irreconcilable with this supposition. Even when endeavoring to show the mode of baptism unimportant, his arguments are chiefly derived from the spiritual nature of Christianity rendering all forms non-essential, thus curiously coming round to the chief error of Popery, *i. e.*, taking for granted that baptism and salvation are so far connected that what is essential to the one is essential to the other!

Nearly all the rest of his argument is based, in truth, as we shall see, on this fallacy, that if a Greek word *ever* has more senses belonging to it than its one most usual meaning, it can never be supposed, without demonstrative proof, to be used in less than the whole complement of its possible significations at the same time.

Thus far have Baptist principles been fully conceded by the most enlightened of other denominations, in theory at least. Were each of these admissions but universally acted upon—were baptism delayed until the only proper time of full communion, *i. e.*, that of personal faith, and were immersion alone practiced, every division might be done away, and all Christians have now, as at first, "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism."

BOOK II.

CONTROVERTED PRINCIPLES.

We turn now to consider those principles which form the chief points of controversy remaining between Baptists and other denominations.

1. The Command to Baptize a Command to Immerse.
2. The Importance of Believer's Baptism.
3. Infant Baptism Injurious as well as Unscriptural.
4. Mixed Communion Unwise and Injurious.

CHAPTER I.

THE COMMAND TO BAPTIZE A COMMAND TO IMMERSE.

§ I. Ordinary use of *βαπτίζω*.

To persons not versed in this controversy, the subject of the present chapter and that of the foregoing will appear so nearly alike, that none, it might be almost presumed, who would admit what has been shown to be conceded in the former, would question what we are still obliged to call controverted ground. Yet such a supposition would be

erroneous. Many excellent Christians, freely admitting that primitive baptism was performed only by immersion, yet suppose that the command to be baptized may now be validly fulfilled in other ways. Many more who admit the exceptions to immersion, if any, to have been extremely rare and guarded, yet take the same ground. The word βαπτίζω, they say, though primarily and almost always meaning to "*dip*," to "*immerse*," or to "*plunge*," has in some few cases other significations, less specific as to mode, and from this they infer that the command of Christian baptism may therefore be fulfilled without immersion. The object of the present chapter will be to show the progress of opinion upon this subject, and how far the discussions of the last hundred years have reduced the points of difficulty and tended to establish those views for which the Baptists have usually contended. It will, first of all, be necessary to show how far the general principles and laws of interpretation that have been developed by the Biblical studies of such men as Professor Stuart and others, enable us to limit with precision the meaning of a divine command, even though the principal words of that command may each have several distinct senses. After this is done, it will be proper to inquire if it has been proved, during the last hundred years, that βαπτίζω ever has actually in Greek literature any meaning which does not necessarily involve the idea of immersion. The specific instances in which alone scholars like Professor Stuart and Robinson contend that it is not involved in the literal meaning of the word, are very few. Apart from the rite of Christian baptism, and one or two that will prove figurative uses, these cases amount but to about *seven* in the whole compass of Greek literature. *None* of these belong to classic Greek, but are found either

in the Bible or Apocrypha. They can, therefore, with a little attention, be tolerably well estimated, even by those not acquainted with the original. Perhaps the sense of this term will thus be found quite as specific and certain as the English word "*dip*."

If, at sea, the captain of a sloop-of-war were to order one of the hands "to *dip* a bucket overboard," would any one doubt the meaning of the word "*dip?*" But if, thereupon, the sailor merely suspended the bucket a few minutes outside the vessel, where the waves might splash and wet it with their spray, and then were gravely to assert that he had obeyed the order, and dipped the bucket as he was instructed, would the captain hesitate to assert on oath, if necessary, before a court-martial, that the man had utterly neglected to obey the command given?

But suppose the accused were to plead, in justification, that he had found a copy of Milton's works in the library of the forecastle, and had read in "Comus" a passage which fully justified his construction of the command, as follows:

> "A cold shuddering dew
> *Dips* me all o'er."

Suppose he should urge hence, that it was clear the word dip in the order given was quite ambiguous, and might mean merely to bedew or to sprinkle; if he should produce the various meanings of the word, given in Webster's Dictionary, in proof of the ambiguity of the command, and particularly his fifth signification, *i. e.*, "to moisten," "to wet," and argue thence that *nothing more* was decided by the verb used than that liquid was to be applied in some way to the bucket, but that it mattered not how:—suppose he were even to argue on this basis, that the word "dip"

did not intimate any thing as to *mode*, but merely conveyed the idea of "moistening," or of "purification;" would it not be instantly replied that the meaning of the word "dip" must be determined by its *common usage*, and the general manner of speaking, where no special reason for supposing an exception was shown. Would it not be urged that almost all words are used sometimes in different senses, but by a well-known principle of language and of common sense, each word, although it should possess a dozen distinct meanings, can have but *one* of these significations at the same time, so that in interpreting a command we are not at liberty to affix to each word all of its possible senses, or to pick out from among them any one that may suit our pleasure, but the meaning of a command is always that signification of each word which the most common usage in such cases shows to have been intended by the speaker, exceptional meanings requiring specific proof in proportion to their rarity.

Now in place of the English word "dip" let the reader put its exact equivalent in Greek, βαπτίζω, and he will have before him an illustration of the real question whether the command to baptize is a command to immerse, as it has developed itself, especially during the last hundred years, through the researches of such critics even as Professors Stuart and Robinson. There is only this difference, that there has not been produced from the whole compass of Greek literature, a single instance in which βαπτίζω is used in so figurative a manner as our English word "dip," in the instance quoted from the writings of Milton.[1] Apart from its use in reference to the rite of Christian baptism, we shall find that the meaning of the word βαπτίζω more clearly and

[1] See p. 143.

uniformly involves immersion in Greek, according to Liddell and Scott's Lexicon, the latest and most approved standard, than "dip" does in English, according to Webster.

If the Sacred Scriptures had been originally written in English, and the word "*dip*" had been placed by the pen of inspiration, where we now read "*baptize*," few we suppose would esteem the meaning at all doubtful, even though it could be proved that the word was sometimes used differently from its primary signification.

There has been much error on this point. The real question to be settled is not whether, throughout the whole range of Greek literature, any cases do or do not occur, in which the term *βαπτίζω* is used in any other sense than "*immerse*," as one would suppose from the arguments of most of our Pedobaptist brethren. They generally content themselves with attempting to prove that *βαπτίζω may sometimes* be used in another sense, freely conceding, as all who know any thing of the language must, that the *primary* and *common* usage of the term is precisely what Baptists contend. This is the first and most important point of issue now remaining between Baptists and Pedobaptists, not whether the word *βαπτίζω always* involves immersion, but whether the command to baptize is always a command to immerse. The question is as to a law of interpretation.

Almost every word has several significations, but the interpreter of Scripture has not therefore a right to attach any of the senses he pleases, much less all of them, but he is to take that *one* meaning, in each case, which common usage and the connection show to have been in the mind of the writer, and that is *the* sense of every command of Scripture, to the exclusion of all the other possible meanings, as completely as though they never existed.

In Ernesti's Principles of Interpretation, as translated and enlarged by Professor Stuart, it is laid down "that *the sense of a word can not be diverse or multifarious at the same time, and in the same passage or expression.*

"All men, in their daily conversation and writings, attach but *one* sense to a word at the same time and in the same passage, unless they design to speak in enigmas. Of course it would be in opposition to the universal custom of language if more than one meaning should be attached to any word of Scripture in such a case. *Yet many have often done this.*

"Although a word can have but one meaning at the same time and in the same place, usage has gradually assigned many meanings to the same word. The question, then, for an interpreter, is simply this: Which *one* of the significations that a word has, is connected with its use in any particular instance."[1]

It might be admitted, therefore, for the sake of argument, that many other senses may belong to the word βαπτίζω, but the question then would be, which *one* of these significations is that which our Saviour intended in this particular command?

It is just at this point that a distinguished Pedobaptist, whom the writer of these pages will ever feel bound to revere and esteem, appears to him to have fallen into an important mistake. Defining the question at issue, Professor Pond says,[2] "Whatever Baptists offer to show that immersion is a valid mode, or the most proper mode, or that it was frequently practiced in ancient times, has no direct bearing on the controversy, and no tendency to bring it to a close. Let them prove what we deny, that immersion is

[1] Part i. chap. 1, secs. 17, 18. [2] Treatise on Baptism, p 14.

essential to baptism—*so essential that there can be no baptism without it*, and our differences on the subject are at an end." This comes just after representing the Baptists as asserting that "the meaning of the word [βαπτίζω] is always the same, and it always signifies to dip. It never has any other meaning." Now it is true that most Baptists hold what he here represents, in regard to the meaning of the original word for baptize. But it is obvious that he has confounded two things that might differ greatly, *i. e.*, what is essential to *Christian baptism*, and what is always essential to the meaning of the Greek word βαπτίζω. Hence he has misconceived the point at issue in such a way as to give himself great advantage. The question just now certainly is not whether immersion is "so essential to the meaning of the word βαπτίζω that there can be *no* baptism without it" but whether the sense of the command is such that immersion is enjoined in *Christian* baptism. The first is a speculative question of Greek philology—a comparatively nice and minute question—one upon which ninety-nine out of a hundred Christians can form but little positive opinion; but the other belongs to the common sense meaning of a plain command intended to be easily understood and clear to the masses of Christians, one that would always be thus clear but for the learned dust that has been thrown around it.

Our blessed Saviour gave his disciples instructions to "*baptize*" a certain class of persons. The word, we will suppose, may have five or six different senses, as most words have, and as Webster considers "dip" to have. But we want just now to find that *one* sense which βαπτίζω has in this command. To ascertain this, the first resort is obviously to *common usage;* and, unless something in the preposi-

tions, idiom, connection, or circumstances decide otherwise, this and this *alone* is the meaning of the command.

In Professor Stuart's Ernesti the question is asked, "If the same word has many significations, how can the meaning in each case be found? 1. From the general manner of speaking, *i. e.*, from *common usage.* 2. From the proximate words or context. That is, *the usual and obvious meaning is attached to the word*, or else one which the context renders necessary. In addition to the aid drawn from these sources, an interpreter may sometimes obtain assistance from the scope or design of the writer, or from history, antiquities, or the nature of the subject."[1]

If a house is "to let," and a foreigner declares the meaning of the advertisement not clear, because Webster's Dictionary tells him that "let" sometimes means to "*hinder*," will it not relieve his difficulty to adhere to the only common sense rule of construing words, *i. e.*, according to ordinary usage, until proof of another is shown.

Whatever else may be questioned, no competent person will now deny that the primary and prevailing meaning of this term in ordinary usage was precisely equivalent to our English words to "dip," or to "immerse." If ever it had any other senses, they were either merely figurative, or very secondary to this the ordinary usage, and they almost always involve in some way the primary idea.

More than fifty years ago, Professor Campbell, in his "Notes on Matthew iii. 11," had conceded in the fullest manner that the ordinary sense of βαπτίζω was so obviously immerse, that he said he should have preferred to adopt it instead of baptize throughout the New Testament but for the fact that the other term had been so long in use.

[1] Part i, chap. i. sec. 19.

Since that time the most important Pedobaptist authorities on this point are such lexicons as those of Robinson, or Liddell and Scott, and such a dissertation as that of Professor Stuart.

As to the primary meaning of *βαπτίζω* there is no question. Professor Stuart even says: "The original etymological root of *βαπτίζω*, *βάπτω*, as also the nouns and adjectives kindred with them, appears plainly to be the monosyllable *ΒΑΠ*. The leading and original meaning of the monosyllable seems to have been *dipping*, *plunging*, *immerging*, *soaking*, *or drenching* in some liquid substance."[1]

The common regular usage of this verb in classic Greek is fully proved by all these authorities.

Robinson gives under this head "to dip in, sink, immerse, to dip in a vessel, to draw water."

Liddell and Scott give the following meanings in the first edition of their Lexicon: "To dip repeatedly, dip under, *mid.* bathe, hence to steep, to wet, to pour upon, drench, to dip a vessel, draw water, to baptize." In the next edition, "*to steep, to wet, to pour upon, to drench,*" are all expunged.[2]

Professor Stuart, indeed, has accurately and at length gone over the whole ground, and considered all the meanings of *βαπτίζω* in classic Greek, and at the conclusion he admits that there is no proof in it all that the word is ever used in any other than one of the two following senses:

"1. To dip, plunge, immerse any thing in liquid.

"2. To overwhelm literally or figuratively."[3]

[1] Biblical Repos. April, 1833, p. 288. [2] See p. 179.

[3] The only possible exception to this, in Professor Stuart's view, is the following passage brought forward as "not altogether certain," but probably meaning "*to bathe*, by the application of liquid to the surface." Dionysius, of Helicarnasus, is commenting upon Homer, Il. xii. 333,

In other words, the general classic usage of this term is, if possible, more clear, unambiguous, and uniform in its meaning than our English word to "*dip*."

Nor do any exceptional cases, which he supposes to exist in the New Testament, affect the above conclusion, so far as the *prevailing* and current sense of the word among the Jews in our Saviour's time is concerned. In the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, Professor Stuart concedes immersion to be the predominant meaning. So also in the Apocrypha. In Josephus and Philo the uniformity of this usage is unquestioned.[1] Hence Professor Stuart, winding up his remarks on the whole use of the word, classic and Hellenistic, or sacred, and asking the question, "What is the proper force and signification of the word according to the general use of language?" concedes fully that "A review of the preceding examples must lead any person to the conclusion that *the predominant usage* of the words *βαπτω* and *βαπτίζω* is to designate the idea of dipping, plunging, and overwhelming."[2]

This concession as to the customary signification of the word, throws the burden of proving an exception in the

where it is said of Ajax that he struck Cleobulus across the neck with his heavy sword, "*and the whole sword became warmed with blood.*" On this text Dionysius remarks that here "Homer exhibits very great emphasis, as much as to say, the sword was so *bathed* (*βαπτισθέντος*) with blood as to become heated." But this should be rendered as Professor Stuart allows it might, "the sword was so *dipped*, or immersed in blood, as to become heated."

[1] Thus when the former is speaking of the death of Aristobulus, drowned by order of Herod, he says: "The boy was sent by night to Jericho, but there being, according to command, plunged (*βαπτιζομένος*) in a diving-bath by the Gauls, he died." (Wars of the Jews 1, 17.)

[2] Bib. Repos., April, 1833, p. 313.

case of a command like this, upon those who claim it. It fixes the meaning of immersion upon the injunction, unless some other sense is shown to be more obvious in this case.

In an important command like this of baptism given by Divine inspiration, we must presume that the term used is unequivocal *in itself*, as the Baptists contend, unless the connection renders some other meaning instantly clear; for it is a settled law of all correct language, that "equivocal terms ought ever to be avoided, unless where their connection with the other words of the sentence *instantly* ascertain the meaning."[1]

The whole certainty of language rests upon this principle. We build upon it the most important and certain of our conclusions. All our assurance from Scripture, even of *eternal* happiness for the righteous, rests upon it, as well as of the eternal punishment of the wicked. When, for instance, in arguing with a Universalist, we set before him the terms "eternal" and "everlasting," or rather the original αἰώνιος, he will, of course, plead that there are instances, like Ecclus., xlv. 15, and that the term does not mean fully and fairly without any end. And have we to go through the whole range of Greek literature, and give up the eternity of the blessedness of heaven if there shall be one or two cases found in which, figuratively or literally, the word may possibly have reference to a less duration? Surely it is sufficient if we establish a prevailing usage. We are then entitled to claim that as the sense of the promise or the threatening of Scripture, unless those who think otherwise can produce proof of a different meaning in this case. The burden of showing an exception is thrown on them.

[1] Campbell's Rhetoric, book ii. chap. 6, sec. 2, part 1.

So the command to baptize is here plainly a command to immerse, unless some special exceptional meaning can be clearly proved from the connection or circumstances to apply in this case. It is not enough to show that the word may mean this or that in other cases, but that it must mean something else here. Until that be done, the most usual and obvious sense of the word *is the command.* We have no right, by our constructions, to put ambiguities into the Divine laws.

§ II. The Force of the Prepositions.

In illustrating the command to baptize, near the commencement of the former section, the use of any preposition that would determine the nature of the command was carefully avoided, so that it might rest upon the *usual* meaning of the verb alone. But if in the case we supposed, the captain had directed the sailor to "*dip* the bucket *in*, or *into*, the sea," the case would, of course, be, if possible, still plainer. Or if, in addition to being told to "dip the bucket overboard," it were in evidence that the captain himself had just previously performed the same ceremony by way of example to the men, and to the knowledge of this sailor, by dipping the bucket "*in*" or "*into*" the water, could more be desired? The concessions of Pedobaptists have made the case now, as we shall show, as clear as this would make it in the supposed illustration. A caviler might say that even our English preposition "*in*" is sometimes used where we only mean "on the surface," as Genesis, i. 22, "let fowl multiply *in* the earth." Chaucer thus speaks twice of "starving wretchedly *in* a mountain." Less literally still, we speak of a man being "*in* wine," intending only that

the wine is in him. Nor is "*into*" more absolutely decisive.[1] But we rightly argue that where, as in Mark, i. 9, or Matthew, iii. 6, the obvious sense of the preposition confirms the obvious sense of the verb, it *forms a construction* as direct and decisive as language can make it.

It has been commonly asserted by our Pedobaptist brethren that the prepositions used in connection with the descriptions of baptism could not assist in determining the sense of the command, or the method in which the rite was administered, and might mean either that baptism was to be *with* or *in* water as we pleased to understand them. This is a great mistake.

We first consider Professor Stuart's own proposed rule for showing immersion to be the sense of the term βαπτίζω in the clearest possible manner by the use of the prepositions in connection with it.

"The Greek classic writers are accustomed, when they designate the idea of *plunging*, *dipping*, *immersing*, *etc.*, INTO any thing, to put the name of that thing in the accusative case after βάπτω or βαπτίζω, *and to put before this case the preposition* εἰς, *or some equivalent one.*"[2]

In the account of the baptism of Jesus Christ, by John, Mark, i. 9, we have precisely this very form of construction, rendered as follows in our English version: "Jesus came and was baptized of John *in* Jordan," (εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην). The primary and most natural idea of εἰς indicates motion *into* as Passow, Robinson and all lexicons agree. As such

[1] See John, vi. 15, and Rev. viii. 5. Of course the English prepositions "in" and "into" are used more specifically as a whole than the Greek ἐν and εἰς; but *in the constructions* above, the sense of them is not more clear and definite.

[2] Bib. Repos. April, 1833, p. 313.

it is opposed to ἐκ.[1] That it may mean *at*, in other cases, is not questioned, because all the prepositions are thus indefinite, except by the connection. They are so in a degree even in English. But here the sense is as clear as Greek words can make it. The concurrence of translators is strong but the following cases from Professor Stuart are highly important concessions. Quoting an exactly similar use of the preposition εις and accusative after the verb here used, he says, "Ἐβάπτισε εἰς τὸν ποταμόν, *can not usually mean less than that the individual of whom this is affirmed, did actually dive* INTO *the water, or was in some way submerged into it.*"[2] Not a single exception to this usage has been pointed out by Professor Stuart in the whole range of Greek literature, nor, we may venture to add, can it be found. Quoting a passage before referred to, from Dionysius of Halicarnassus in which he uses the βαπτίζω followed by the dative without any preposition, and which Gale renders "dipped *in* blood;" Professor Stuart admits that it is capable of being so rendered, but thinks that this meaning would have been more certain if, instead of the dative, he had used εἰς followed by the accusative.[3] Just thus we have it, Mark, i. 9. So that there is, in regard to our Saviour's baptism, precisely that form of expression which Professor Stuart would himself imagine and suggest as the most unequivocal possible to make it certain that Jesus was baptized not *at* the river merely, or *with* its water, but was plunged *in* or *into* the Jordan. He can conceive of no combination of terms in the Greek language that would make it more certain. Here at least the preposition adds every confirmation and clearness that a preposition can to the signification of the verb itself, so that the real question is, whether the Greek

[1] See Liddell and Scott, Art. Ἐν. [2] Page 317. [3] Page 305.

language *can* unequivocally express that a person was dipped *in* water. Robinson, in his Lexicon, gives this passage, Mark, i. 9, as a clear case of being baptized or plunged "*into* the Jordon," and Bloomfield[1] (who seems to think it possible that the eunuch having descended *into* the water might then only have had water poured copiously on his head) gives up the sense of this passage as decisive in favor of a complete immersion of the Saviour *in* the river. "The sense," he says, "is, 'was dipped or plunged *into*,' * * * or it may here be 'He underwent the rite of baptism by being plunged *into* the water.'" Matthew's account corroborates this idea. It is then *as clear*, from Mark, i. 9, *as it is in the power of Greek words to make it*, that Jesus was baptized by being immersed in Jordan. The verb, the preposition, and the circumstances all concur in rendering this the only opinion. And this alone, in the absence of other evidence would be sufficient to fix the meaning of the command by an illustration.

And further, this being established, the *absence* of any preposition in Luke's[2] account goes to show that he considered immersion here as sufficiently indicated by the verb βαπτίζω itself; and that there was nothing but what was customary in this case so far as the method of baptism was concerned.

If, then, we had not a single other case of baptism in the New Testament to illustrate the sense to be attached to the command, this one, showing the manner in which he who gave it had submitted to the rite himself, would be as perfect and authoritative an exposition as could be conceived, sufficient to clear a hundred elliptical expressions in which it might not have been thought necessary to add any prepo-

[1] Notes on Matt., iii. 16. [2] Chap. iii. 21.

sition. This is one of the most important results to a candid mind of going over Professor Stuarts' examination of these prepositions.

But is there any thing in the particles elsewhere to contradict this sense, or prevent it being attached to the command? Do we, for instance, find any such preposition as we might expect somewhere to meet with, if pouring water *upon* a person or sprinkling him *with* it, had been the mode adopted, but such as would not be used if immersion *in* water were intended? More than fifty years ago it was remarked by one of the most judicious critics, that there is not one such case in the New Testament. We never, for instance, find ἐπί or ἀπό thus immediately in connection with baptize, "which (as Campbell remarks) we doubtless should if sprinkling had been intended."[1] On the contrary, in Mark i. 5, and Matt. iii. 6, we have a form of construction in which the use of the preposition ἐν [*in*] is, clearly in the opinion of this very high authority, not less decisive. Here we read of John, that "there went out unto him Jerusalem and all Judea * * * and were baptized of him *in Jordan.*" (ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ).

It is true Professor Stuart contends that "in all these cases the manner of the action is no further designed than the word βαπτίζω implies it."[2] But here it is that the development of those settled rules and laws of language and of interpretation to which the last hundred years has contributed so much, become invaluable.

If Professor Stuart's view of the case were correct, it would simply follow that the common usage of the verb would still be decisive of the command, there being nothing to cause a deviation. Or the clear passages would de-

[1] Note on Matthew, iii. 11. [2] Page 319.

cide those supposed to be doubtful. Certainly the doubtful could not shake the clear. "If one passage is accurately expressed so as to admit of no doubt it can not admit of any accommodation. *The doubtful one must be accommodated to the plain.*"[1] It has just been established that John immersed Jesus *in* the Jordan, and that this was regarded by Luke as sufficiently indicated by the verb βαπτίζω alone, without any preposition. And we are now told that there were multitudes of others who received the same rite from the same administrator. Since the common, regular, and established meaning of the verb is to immerse, that is the sense we are bound to affix to it in the absence of opposite proof. If the signification is made clear in Mark, i. 9, we have no right to consider it ambiguous in verse 5. A narrative or a command is often expressed less specifically in proportion as it is supposed to be well understood. "There are in all languages," as Dr. Campbell says, "certain elliptical expressions which use has established, and which therefore very rarely occasion darkness. When they do occasion it they ought always to be avoided." If, then, the evangelists have not avoided elliptical expressions in regard to this rite, in any case, we are bound to conclude it was because there was nothing to render ambiguous the sense of the verb.

But the prepositions are, in fact, *quite decisive* in confirming the regular meaning of the verb in all cases, as Campbell has shown and as will be seen more fully at Appendix C. Here it is sufficient to remark that, according to the last edition of Professor Robinson's lexicon of the New Testament, in every case where *any* preposition is used by the sacred writers in this relation to βαπτίζω, and the ele-

[1] Stuart's Ernesti, § 186.

ment of the baptismal rite, it *always* indicates the *manner*, and that manner to be immersion as plainly as our English word "*in*" can express this. Thus, according to him, it should be translated.

Even Professor Robinson's evident desire in the three cases of St. Luke (considered in Appendix C.), in which there is no preposition, to leave the sense of the verb ambiguous, only makes his views of the force of the prepositions more marked and decisive, and shows that the latest Pedobaptist authority directly contradicts Professor Stuart's estimate of the force of the prepositions here. Dr. Campbell goes further, and comments with great severity on those who in these cases do not translate the preposition so as to give the most unequivocal support to the idea of immersion. In his note on Matt. iii. 11, he says, that so "inconsistent" are King James' translators in having rendered the clause ἐν ὕδατι "*with* water" that "none of them have scrupled to render 'εν τῷ 'Ιορδάνῃ in the sixth verse '*in* Jordan,' though nothing can be plainer than that, if there be any incongruity in the expression 'in water,' this 'in Jordan' must be equally incongruous. But they have seen that the preposition *in* could not be avoided there without adopting a circumlocution and saying 'with the water of Jordan,' which would have made their deviation from the text too glaring." "It is to be regretted," he adds, "that we have so much evidence that even good and learned men allow their judgments to be warped by the sentiments and customs of the sect which they prefer. The true partisan, of whatever denomination, always inclines to correct the diction of the Spirit by that of the party."

The above is a fair review of the light thrown upon this question during the last century by the discussions in regard

to the force of the prepositions used in connection with baptism. In a word, they are not such particles as "doubtless would have been used" as Campbell well says, had βαπτίζω meant in these cases to "sprinkle" or to "pour." But they are such as show it to be the duty of the translator in all cases to make his construction as indicative of immersion as our English word "*in*" can make it.

§ III. Circumstances attending Baptism.

It has often been urged that it was impossible for water to have been found in the city of Jerusalem for the baptism of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost, no river being near at hand. A hundred years ago, when sacred geography was but little understood, few persons could definitely meet such assertions, and they have become so common, handy, and habitual, that to this day the same thing is often urged as an objection even by the most respectable writers. But within the last thirty years the sacred city has been so measured and explored by surveyors of the highest authority, that a point like this can be settled now on data that can not be shaken. The researches of Dr. Robinson and others, in Palestine, have established the most ample conveniences. It will be sufficient simply to enumerate five or six of the principal public pools, the dimensions of which are or were as follows. The figures are in most cases those of Dr. Robinson.

1. There was *the Pool of Bethesda*, where the impotent man lay. It had every convenience and suitability for this rite, three hundred and sixty feet long, one hundred and thirty feet broad, seventy-five feet deep in parts, but so ar-

ranged round the sides as to afford facilities for the baptism of multitudes.

2. *The King's*, or *Solomon's Pool*, supplied from "the Fountain of the Virgin," according to Dr. Robinson, is fifteen feet long, six feet broad, three feet deep in parts, and capable of being raised for bathing purposes by a slight dam used to this day. It was supplied with a constant stream of fresh water, and exactly fit for immersing any number.

3. *The Pool of Siloam*, fifty-three feet long, eighteen feet broad, nineteen feet deep in parts, with another small pool close by, *both* commonly used for bathing purposes as Dr. Robinson remarks.

4. *The Old Pool*, or *Upper Pool in the highway of the Fuller's Field*, according to Dr. Robinson, three hundred and sixteen feet long, two hundred and eighteen feet broad, eighteen feet deep in parts, covering more than an acre and a half, "with steps at the corners, by which to descend into it."

5. *The Pool of Hezekiah*, according to Dr. Robinson, two hundred and forty feet long, one hundred and forty-four feet broad, covering thus more than an acre of ground, with a descent of steps at the north-west angle, and sloping bottom in other places.

6. *The Lower Pool of Gihon*, according to Dr. Robinson, five hundred and ninety-two feet long, two hundred and sixty feet broad, forty-two feet deep in parts. It covers more than *four acres* of ground, is rather a pond than a pool in point of size, its sides having a slope just adapted to a descent for immersion. In this spot alone, three thousand or any number might have been baptized the same day. There are many other cisterns and pools in which immersion could

have been performed. In all of these places the sides are more or less sloping, so that unless at the time of some freshet they would have been suitable for bathing.[1]

The time it would have occupied to have immersed the three thousand, used commonly to be brought forward as an objection to the ordinary signification of βαπτίζω in Acts, ii. 41. Now it is seldom adduced, probably, because so little if any time would have been saved by adopting any other method.

It is worthy of remark that this difficulty never has troubled those who would best know it, if it were real. There is something painfully little in having to discuss questions of time about a matter of this solemn interest; it is an ordinance that is usually prolonged, from its pleasing nature. And yet it may be proper to show that if time were an object, little, if any thing, would necessarily be gained by sprinkling in place of immersion, where a large number had to be baptized. What antiquary ever denied the immersion of the *ten* thousand, baptized in one day in the river Swale, near the beginning of the seventh century, on account of supposed difficulties of this kind? Or who ever ventured to question that the baptism of the *three* thousand on Easter eve, A.D. 404, at Constantinople, disturbed by the officers sent to arrest Chrysostom, was by immersion? And yet with all the complicated mysteries then introduced, this must have been more difficult to accomplish in one night than that of the three thousand in one day by the administrators of those times.

A few years ago a minister had occasion to baptize twenty-seven persons in a stream of water. The plan

[1] For a full description of the above, see Baptismal Tracts, 115, 36, by Dr. Chase and Rev. G. W. Sampson.

adopted, was one which had been customary in that place for one or two generations. The administrator having proceeded a convenient distance into the stream with an assistant acquainted with the ground, the candidates properly attired followed in procession, not behind exactly, but a little to the right hand of the minister. As each was baptized he passed on a little to the left, and another was ready to step forward immediately, and another, and another, while those baptized walked in procession to the shore. In this way the principal time really was occupied by the administrator in repeating the baptismal formula, for that taken up by the immersion was scarcely a second, and would not make the service much, if any longer than by pouring. It was a solemn season and one over which neither the administrator nor the candidates had the least disposition to hurry, nor will that semi-circular procession ever fade from the minds of those who witnessed it. A short time afterward, one of the deacons, a gentleman most careful and exact in all he said and did,[1] informed the writer that he had marked the time occupied in administering baptism to the whole twenty-seven candidates, which was just *eight minutes*. In this way which is as solemn as any in which the ordinance could be performed, especially where there is a large number of candidates, the whole of the three thousand might have been baptized by twelve administrators in less than *one hour and a quarter*.

But a better knowledge of early ecclesiastical customs than was customary a hundred years ago has reduced this objection to a perfect absurdity. Then the masses of Chris-

[1] The late Oliver Stevens, Esq., of Savannah, father of the esteemed missionary of that name in Burmah, for so many years the companion in labor of Judson.

tians probably believed that under no circumstances could a baptism be valid unless performed by a minister, regularly ordained, and bringing down a title to administer it in succession from the Apostles, who, it was therefore granted, could alone have been the dispensers of the ordinances in this case. But now it is well known to all, that in the earliest times the administration of baptism was not confined to ministers, and that the Apostles generally preferred not to baptize with their own hands.

It is probable that the seventy at least were even more engaged in baptizing than the twelve, according to apostolic custom.[1] These two bodies alone would give eighty-two administrators. If we should suppose a hundred present, who might be employed in case of any difficulty as to time, and even a minute occupied in the baptism of each (which is more than double what was necessary where there were several candidates), the whole might have been administered in thirty minutes. Making all allowance for changes of dress, there is no difficulty as to time.[2]

Such are the two *only* difficulties, from attendant circumstances in the way of considering the rite of baptism always to have required immersion, unless perhaps some should suppose that of the jailor and his household to demand elucidation. But in those Eastern countries where baths are so usual, what is there remarkable in this case?

[1] See Acts, xi. 48, and 1 Cor. i. 14.

[2] It is surprising that it never occurred to those who make this objection to immersion, how much more strongly it would bear against *infant* baptism, which, if administered, as a matter of course, according to their supposition, and only on this account not recorded, must have required them to bring forward their children also, doubling the number to be baptized, and far more than doubling the time required for its administration.

Judson observed the commonness of baths in jail premises even in India.

However, the labors of modern Pedobaptists may assist us here a little. It was in a city (Philippi) on "the Place of Fountains," "*so called from its numerous streams*," scooped out no doubt into many reservoirs, on account of the gold and silver mines which first brought its early inhabitants together. Here flowed the River Gangas, by which must have stood the house of prayer where Lydia's heart was opened. But was there water *in the prison* sufficient for baptism? it is demanded. Probably not, for as Connybeare has shown, it is distinctly intimated that the jailor took them out of the prison itself to some fountain or convenient place for ablution, probably connected with the prison, where he washed their stripes, and was baptized before he again removed them into his own house.[1]

Now this is *every thing* which used to be supposed adverse to the idea of immersion connected with the rite of baptism in the New Testament; and it all exhibits not the slightest occasion to imagine any deviation intended from the ordinary signification of the word, when used in the command.

But this is not all. There are many facts mentioned that have been supposed to imply immersion. To begin with the baptism of John. It is particularly mentioned that he went to *the Jordan* to baptize, and that Jesus came *to that river* to receive the ordinance. Apart from the force of

[1] Παραλαβὼν, in verse 33, intimates a change of place. Prof. Stuart fails of his usual accuracy, therefore, in supposing the water for the washing of their stripes and baptism to have been brought into the prison. See Connybeare and Howson's Life of St. Paul, vol. i. pp. 311, 331. London quarto edition.

the prepositions, why is he represented as "coming up (ἀπό) out of, or even from *the water?*" And why is it so carefully specified[1] that it was "*because there was much water there*," that John selected Enon as a place for baptism, and that the people came *there* and were baptized? It has been said that it may mean simply that there were "*many streams*" there. Suppose it so; what then? Why the people *may* have brought their flocks with them, and have needed convenient streams for these. But why then should the water be more carefully specified than the grass? For, what we want to know is, why the "much water" or "many waters" is so particularly mentioned, just *between* the two announcements of baptism. It must have been for the reason given by Bloomfield, *i. e.*, that "it is plain, from various passages of the Gospels, that baptism was administered by the baptizer *after having placed the person to be baptized in some river or brook.* And that plenty of water was thought desirable, we learn from John, iii. 23."[2] The phrase ὕδατα πολλὰ is so used in all other places as almost necessarily to imply a *large* body or bodies of water, rather than many little streams.[3] Campbell adheres to the English translation. It is straining to question that the allusion here is clearly to immersion and nothing else.[4]

The case of the eunuch is generally considered as an illustration of immersion.[5] "See here is water." Why this for aspersion? Why this remark, and if made, why is it recorded? And again, why do they *both* go down *into*

[1] John, iii. 23. [2] See Bloomfield's Notes on Acts, viii. 38.

[3] See Ripley's Reply to Stuart, pp. 64–72; and Robinson's Calmet. Art. Gibeon.

[4] But see Samson's letter, pp. 146–152, in Chase's Design of Baptism.

[5] Acts, viii. 38.

(εἰς) the water, and come up *out of* (ἐκ) the water? It is said the prepositions *may* mean that they went down only *to* the water, and came up *from* it. Suppose it so. Why do they both go down *to* the water? Why not send the charioteer? or if they go, why so particular to record it, and the coming up out of, or from it? But in fact there is not the slightest reason to depart from the natural sense of εἰς, which clearly indicates here *into*, as ἐκ *out of*, to suit the verb and the noun. Bloomfield admits this, and that "the baptizer and the baptized" both went "*into* water of some depth," in this case, and customarily. For what then should both go into the water, in baptism, but immersion? These circumstances, so naturally and specifically recorded, all make up an amount of corroboration that it is difficult to estimate and impossible to overcome, conceded and confirmed as we find them now by the clearest results of modern criticism.

§ IV. The Figurative allusions to Baptism.

Some have found in 1 Corinthians, x. 2, "were baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea," an allusion to the spray of the Red Sea *sprinkling* the Israelites. This Professor Stuart gives up.[1] Baptists consider that the reference is to their going down into the bed of the Red Sea, which stood as a wall on the right hand and on the left, until they came up again out of the deep, the cloud above them completing the immersion. That this baptism was figurative, and not related as literal, is evident. But all figures rest on a basis of fact. That the Iraelites were not *literally* immersed in the sea is plain. But that is far from

[1] Page 333.

justifying Professor S.'s assertion, that it seems "of necessity to imply that immersion is not essential to the idea of baptism." For the "idea" is founded on the literal fact. What literal fact, in regard to baptism, is the figure based on? Professor Stuart replies thus: "I do not see how, on the whole, we can make less of it than to suppose that it has a tacit reference to the idea of *surrounding* in some way." And again: "It is therefore a kind of figurative mode of expression, derived from the idea that baptism is *surrounding* with a fluid."[1] But how a person could be surrounded with water in baptism without being immersed, it must take some ingenuity to discover, especially if the idea he so often insists on, of *overwhelming*, be added as embraced in the word baptize.

In 1 Peter, iii. 20, 21, baptism is said to be the figure of our being placed in a state of salvation, like Noah in the ark, who was thus kept alive in the midst of the waters. Here the same figure founded upon the water *surrounding and immersing* the sides of the ark in which he was enclosed, is evident. From this idea, Noah's ark became a favorite symbol of the Church with ancient Christians, so long as immersion was practiced, and is constantly found rudely sculptured in the catacombs of Rome, to indicate that the tenant of the tomb within was a member of the Church. The publication of many interesting researches of modern ecclesiastics among the tombs of these ancient saints, illustrated by plates, has within the last few years thrown new interest around this passage. So far as it goes it must be favorable to the Baptist views of the question of immersion, especially as the Apostle, in guarding us against the superstition of supposing its efficacy derived

[1] Page 336.

from "washing away the filth of the flesh," clearly implies that baptism was always a rite in which there was a thorough washing of the whole body.

Hebrews, x. 22, "having our bodies washed with pure water," Professor Stuart admits to be in no way inconsistent with immersion, as this is one way in which cleansing may be effected, but gathers from it that "*washing* was at least one method, and perhaps even the more ordinary one, of practicing baptism.[1] But λελουμένοι should here be rendered "*bathed in*." Trench, in his masterly "Synonymes of the New Testament," says,[2] "λούειν is not so much 'to wash' as 'to bathe,' and λοῦσθαι, 'to bathe oneself,' implies always, not the bathing of a part of the body, *but of the whole*—λελουμένοι τό σῶμα, Heb. x. 23." Thus, baptism is here compared to a bath, and the accurate rendering of the passage would be, "having our bodies *bathed in* pure water."

In Luke, xii. 50, the Saviour says, according to our translators, "I have a baptism to be baptized with," etc. The use of the word *with* in connection with baptism, is prejudicial, for it is a preposition we never use in connection with immersion, and there is nothing in the original to warrant its insertion. Campbell gives the true sense: "I have an immersion to undergo," or as Professor Stuart says, "I am about to be *overwhelmed* with suffering." So in Mark x. 38, "Can ye indeed take upon you to *undergo* patiently and submissively, sufferings like mine—sufferings of an *overwhelming* nature?" So in Matthew, iii. 11, which should read as Campbell translates it and defends, "He shall baptize you in (ἐν) the Holy Ghost and *in* fire.[3]

[1] Most would admit that whatever is here meant by "*washed* with pure water," is spoken of as pertaining to *all* the Christians of the Apostle's time. [2] Pages 216, 17. [3] See his Notes.

There are two other figurative passages considered by the Baptists more decisive than any others as to the light they throw on the manner in which the rite was universally at first understood to be commanded. The first of these is Romans, vi. 4, "We are buried with him by (διὰ) baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." To an unsophisticated English reader, the allusion here, it is urged, is plain. Baptism is made the figure of a *burial*, and immersion is thereby indicated. Almost every commentator of repute, ancient and modern, has adopted this view. Professor Stuart, even while undertaking to show a different sense, confesses that "it is difficult to procure a patient re-hearing, because it has been so long regarded by some as being out of *fair* dispute."[1] [See Appendix D.]

The whole weight of modern criticism is utterly against

[1] The apostolic constitutions say, "Baptism is given into the death of Jesus. The water is instead of the burial; * * * the descent into the water, the dying together with Christ, the ascent out of the water, the rising again with Him." Book iii. ch. 17. And so again at each baptism, the prayer was solemnly made, "Sanctify this water, so that he who is baptized, may die with Him, and may be buried with Him, and may rise with Him," while baptism is thus called in the same prayer, "an emblem of the death of Christ." (Chase's edition of the Constitutions and Canons, book vii. chap. 43.

Chrysostom thus makes baptism an emblem and proof of the resurrection (Hom. 40, in 1 Corinthians), and again "we dip our heads in water as in a grave. Our old man is buried, and when we rise up again the new man rises therewith." (Hom. 25, in John iii. 5.) In fact it would probably be impossible to find a question as to the doubt of these words to immersion, during the first fifteen hundred years of the Christian era.

the new view, as Bloomfield has shown in his comment on Romans, vi. 4. "The rite of immersion," he says "in the baptismal water, and egress from it, were used as a symbol of breaking off all connection with the present sinful life, and giving one's self to a new and pure one." And he gives the sense of verse 4, as follows: "We have been thus buried *in the waters of baptism.* There is a plain allusion to the ancient custom of baptism by immersion." Connybeare declares of Romans, vi. 3, that "this passage *can not be understood* except by remembering that the primitive mode of baptism was by immersion." It is useless to multiply authorities.

The real importance of these allusions, Rom. vi. 4, Col. ii. 12, is that they complete the proof that *nothing else* was known by the Apostle as Christian baptism. It has been commonly conceded by Pedobaptists, that all John's baptisms were by immersion, that Jesus was thus baptized, but then they have sometimes supposed that Christian baptism was *variously* administered. But St. Paul here obviously shows that *all* those to whom he was writing were as a matter of course, and an essential part of their baptism "buried" in the water. He says of himself and all the primitive Christians, "*we* are buried with Christ by baptism." This figure shows how the command to be baptized was every where understood. Indeed the form of a question in verse 3 (which as Connybeare remarks can only be understood by reference to immersion), reduces every other view to an absurdity. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? therefore we are buried with him by baptism," etc.

Thus the biblical criticism of the last hundred years has unfolded an amount of evidence from the figurative allusions

to the ordinance of baptism in the New Testament, which renders it certain that the universal understanding and and practice of all the earliest Christians in reference to the method of administering the rite of baptism, was exactly that of the Baptists. For according to the interpretation of Bloomfield, Connybeare, and others, the language of Romans, vi. 4, is not true of any persons but those immersed in baptism. They may be, and thousands are, *spiritually* dead with Christ. They may be spiritually risen with him. But they are not as all primitive Christians plainly were "buried with him *by baptism*."

§ V. Historical View of Immersion and Sprinkling.

Professor Stuart has devoted a section to the proper inquiry, "What was the mode of baptism practiced by the churches in the early ages of Christianity, and after the times of the Apostles?" While he gives it up as "a thing made out that the ancient practice was immersion,"[1] yet he also thinks it "no doubt true that there were cases of exception allowed to persons in extreme sickness or old age."[2] This is substantially the Baptist view, with one important omission. Professor Stuart does not add how soon this exceptional practice begun. Baptists have claimed that there is not a single case of any baptism but immersion on record, before near the middle of the third century. In a chronological table cited by Coleman from Rheinwald, A.D. 230, is given as the date of the first appearance of clinic baptism.[3]

In examining the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, Professor Stuart complains that "scarcely any thing of a defi-

[1] Page 359. [2] Ibid. [3] Christian Antiquities, p. 531.

nite nature occurs respecting baptism." We can easily gather that baptism was practiced, he thinks, but are not able to determine with precision the manner of the rite. He refers us, however, to a passage in the "Shepherd of Hermas," which he partly quotes. Taken as a whole, it is an important passage here. The vision is indeed but the dream of some ignorant Christian, intended to describe his views of the building up of the Church. This is represented by the erection of a tower upon a rock, near by a place of deep water. The shepherd sees stones raised one by one out of the deep, and others afterward rise out of it themselves, and are carried by virgins and built up in the form of a tower. The shepherd asks the angels what these are that were raised up out of the deep water, and they are shown to be the Old Testament saints; those who rose up of themselves are the Apostles and saints of the New Testament. It is then asked how the Old Testament saints came to arise out of the water and enter into this tower, seeing that they were holy spirits long ago. The angel intimates that they were baptized in the world of spirits by the Apostles. "It was necessary for them to ascend by *water*, that they might be at rest," and that they being dead nevertheless, were thus sealed. "That seal," he proceeds, "is the water of baptism *into which men descend*, being under obligation to death (*i. e.* in a state of condemnation), but come up appointed unto life." The shepherd next asks why the New Testament saints also ascend with them out of the deep, and is answered that the Apostles and teachers went and preached to those who were dead before, and gave them this seal. "*They went down therefore into the water with them, and again came up.*"

The whole of this is one of the most absurd allegories

handed down to us in early Church History. It shows how soon the doctrine of the necessity of baptism to salvation entered, and the folly of having to go out of the Bible for any part of our Christianity, since, at one of the very first steps, we meet with such superstition as this. However, the only question here is whether, when this was written, it is not evident that immersion alone was considered baptism, seeing that the writer plainly thought that even the Old Testament saints had to be immersed! And this, though ordinarily ranked as a production of the first century, is now, on internal evidence, commonly placed in the second.

Professor Stuart proceeds to say, that in the writings of Justin Martyr, "where we might naturally expect something definite, nothing of this nature occurs."[1] He quotes the well-known passage from that writer, in which he says that those who become believers "*are led by us to a place where there is water*," etc. Professor Stuart does not attach the same importance to the verb λοάω that Trench would have done, where Justin says that there "they *are bathed* in the name of God the Father," etc. Yet he observes: "I am persuaded that this passage, as a whole, most naturally refers to immersion; for why, on any other ground, is the convert, who is to be initiated, to go out to the place where there is water. There could be no need of this if mere sprinkling, or partial effusion only, was customary in the time of Justin." Nor is there any thing contrary produced until long after Tertullian, when it ceases to be so important.

Augusti, however, translated by Coleman, says: "It is a great mistake to suppose that baptism by immersion was discontinued when infant baptism became prevalent. This

[1] Page 355.

was as early as the sixth century, but the practice of immersion continued until the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Indeed, it has never been formally abandoned, but is still the mode of administering infant baptism in the Greek Church."[1]

"But enough," writes Professor Stuart. "It is, as says Augusti, *a thing made out*, *i e.*, the ancient practice of immersion. So, indeed, all writers who have thoroughly investigated this subject conclude. I know of no one usage of ancient times which seems to me more clearly and certainly made out. I can not see how it is possible for any candid man who examines the subject to deny this.[2]

We have thus shown the progress of Baptist views, from the concessions of Pedobaptists, as to the rules of interpretation; the usual meaning of βαπτίζω; the force of the prepositions used in connection with it; as to the places where, and circumstances under which, both in Scripture and early Church History, the rite was performed; and even as to the figurative allusions which are all demonstrative of the universality of immersion in primitive baptism.

[1] Coleman's Christian Antiquities, chap. 14, sec. 8, p. 275 Since the first publication of the above work, especially valuable as an excellent condensation and translation of important portions of the conclusions of Augusti, Rheinwald, and others, Mr. Coleman has been unfortunately tempted to recast his work, put in a arge amount of his own, and obliterate some valuable portions of the translations. By this his book is far from having gained in real value, whatever may be the effect on its popularity. Among other results of this, he seems to express the conclusion that one of the earliest corruptions of the Church was the introduction of immersion instead of pouring, or sprinkling, which he sagely conjectures must have taken place at a *very* early date! [2] Page 359.

Nothing more is necessary to determine most certainly that the command to baptize is a command to immerse, although the word βαπτίζω should have a hundred other possible meanings. Nor does the correctness of Baptist views depend in the least upon the nicer philological question we are about to discuss in the next section.

§ VI. Βαπτίζω Always Involves Immersion.

It will now be proper to show how far the discussions of the last hundred years have gone toward *settling* definitely that βαπτίζω is never used in classical or Hellenistic Greek, except with a direct reference to its primary and common signification—*to dip, to immerse.*

All words are either proper terms or rhetorical tropes; that is, they are used either *literally* or *figuratively.* When one of our poets, describing a sunset, says:

> "Each flinty spire
> Was *bathed* in floods of living fire,"

Or another says:

> "A cold, shuddering dew
> *Dips* me all o'er,"

it occasions us no embarrassment. We understand the figurative language by first of all referring back in our minds to the *literal* meaning of the terms. And although the word "bathe" sometimes in English means only to saturate, or wet, copiously *with* and not *in* a fluid, yet in such a passage as that where it occurs above, we form our conception of the figure by conceiving first of all of an immersion. And we grasp the beauty of the figure only as we get a vivid

conception of the literal meaning of the term as there used, distinct from all its other meanings. The figurative use of a word, then, must always, so long as it is figurative, bring before the mind some pre-existing and well-known proper sense of the term. Such a word as "dip" in English, *always*, even when used figuratively, as above, of the dew, first of all gives us the idea of an immersion, which, transferred to the action of the dew, suggests the conception of a saturation as complete as if there had been a literal dipping in water.

No instance in the whole compass of Greek literature has been adduced of so figurative a use of *βαπτίζω* as this of the word "*dip*." One case, however, has been produced from the Septuagint of a kindred term, *βάπτω*, used in very much this way. It is Daniel, iv. 30, concerning Nebuchadnezzar, who, it is said, was driven forth from among men, and made to eat grass like the ox, "and his body was (*ἐβάφη*) *bathed in* the dew of heaven." A single case like this does not molest the literal meaning of *βάπτω*, but rather confirms it, implying as do *all* the figurative uses both of *βάπτω* and *βαπτίζω*, *the largest possible application of fluid* that the nature of the case will admit.

But it is unnecessary to pursue this further, as it is admitted by all, that in the command to baptize the principal verb is not used figuratively, but in some proper sense, and the verb *βάπτω* is never used at all.

Sometimes, it is true, that which was at first only tropical, becomes at length a literal meaning of a word, and it is often a nice point to say whether a term is used literally or figuratively. It is thus that meanings multiply. But this change is only brought about by the common and long-continued usage of a metaphor, so that it ceases to have any influence upon the imagination of those to whom it is ad-

dressed. Thus we never speak now of "*edifying*" a house that we may be erecting, but even confine the proper signification of the word to what must at first have been its metaphorical use, and talk only of *edifying* an audience.

In ascertaining the *literal* meaning of the term βαπτίζω, all the *figurative* uses of it will not affect us then, unless the same figure can be shown to have become so hackneyed, that it had ceased to throw back the imagination to another and literal sense, when alone it would become a proper meaning of the word itself.

(*a*). *Classic use of* βαπτίζω.

The following facts may be considered as no slight proof wrought out by a singular combination of circumstances, that in the whole compass of classic Greek and in the conception of the best critical authorities in the world, the term *βαπτίζω is never once used without involving the idea of immersion, and that it has literally no proper signification that does not include that idea.*

In July, 1843, there was published with great care at the Oxford University Press, the now celebrated and standard Greek Lexicon of Messrs. Liddell and Scott. It was founded on the great one of Passow, published in Germany, but embraced an amount of other investigations far beyond his. In fact, it may be almost said that there is not an important sentence in the whole range of Greek literature that it has not weighed.

At the commencement of this chapter, we gave its definitions of βαπτίζω as they appeared in the *first* edition. Published by the clergymen of the Church of England, their testimony in favor of "pouring," "steeping," or "wetting," as sometimes proper meanings, might not have

been absolutely conclusive with a Baptist, without better proofs than they attempted to produce, but would at least make it incumbent on him to weigh well his case before venturing to dispute the authority of such a work. These definitions have been weighed, however, not by Baptists so much as by independent critics and by the authors of the Lexicon themselves—found wanting, and the senses thus attached to the word *abandoned* and expunged as untenable within a year and a half of their first publication.

The work itself was reviewed in the "London Quarterly," and considered justly, as not indeed without its faults, but very far before all other Greek Lexicons extant. "A great many" of the first scholars suggested "corrections," however, which were made in the second edition.

In the mean time Professor Drisler was bringing out an edition of it in this country with his own "corrections and additions." Shortly after this was published, the Professor of ancient languages in the University of Louisiana, on comparing Professor Drisler's edition with a copy of the second published at Oxford, was surprised to find, that the literal senses of the term βαπτίζω, not implying immersion (unless "bathe" be an exception), which were in the American, were *not to be found in the London copy.* Public attention being called to this fact, and the American editor having been blamed in some quarters for making so important an interpolation without avowing it, he defended himself by showing that the meanings to "*steep*," "*to wet*," "*to pour upon*," "*to drench*," though quietly dashed out by Liddell and Scott from their second edition, were all *in* the first; this suppression being a part of those "corrections" which the Lexicon had undergone through the suggestions and co-operation of their many friends. Another

edition of the American work being called for, it has been brought out by Professor Drisler. Among his own additions and corrections he has not esteemed it fitting to add any thing to the second English edition in regard to this word, but followed it and *withdrawn* all the senses which the Oxford editors had retracted.

The effect of all this in deciding the meaning of the term *βαπτίζω* as a classic Greek word, is most important. If a single instance could have been produced from the researches of Passow, or of any preceding lexicographer, or from a most extensive examination of all the important passages of Greek literature bearing upon it, in the course of a learned controversy of two hundred years, these meanings never would have been retracted by men who are daily in the habit of sprinkling infants. Let any one place side by side the definitions of the two editions.

FIRST EDITION.	SECOND EDITION.
Βαπτίζω, 1. *To dip repeatedly, dip under*, middle voice, *to bathe; hence to steep, wet, to pour upon, drench;* 2. *To dip a vessel, draw water;* 3. *To baptize.*—New Testament.	Βαπτίζω, 1. *To dip repeatedly;* of ships, *to sink them*, passive voice, *to bathe;* 2. *To draw water;* 3. *To baptize.*—New Testament.

It is true that the definition "bathe," is still retained, and as we sometimes use this word in the sense of to soak or to steep copiously *with* a fluid as well as *in* it, this might seem to leave the sense somewhat ambiguous. If so intended it would lessen the value of the dictionary, but in fact, the *obliteration* of the senses *to steep, wet, pour upon, drench*, is a sufficient admission that the word can not once be shown to have the sense of bathing *with* a fluid, as distinct from being immersed *in* it.

The second signification, "*to draw water*," is to "fill by dipping in," and thus to draw, see Liddell and Scott, *βάπτω*. It is simply an elliptical mode of expression. Aristotle[1] gives it more explicitly thus, "One must *dip* *βάψαι* (*i. e.*, the bucket), *and then draw it up*." This sense of *βάπτω* and *βαπτίζω* has been elaborately considered by Professor Stuart, who gives his views of the result thus, "The verb *βάπτω* only is employed in order to convey the meaning *to dip out, to dip up* by plunging a vessel into a liquid, and drawing it up." [2]

Suffice it, then, that in the whole field of classic Greek the embodied learning of the age is not able to produce a single case which these respectable authors will venture to offer as proof that *βαπτίζω* is ever used for any thing distinctly other than immersion. If it had not been first of all publicly claimed by Pedobaptists (but too evidently to favor their own theological views), and then as publicly, from a decent sense of what is due to the scholarship of the age, withdrawn both in England and America, this result would not have been so marked. But this claim to a right in the word having been advanced, and then retracted, is the clearest possible evidence that it can not be sustained by proof, even in the judgment of scholars the most competent to settle such a matter among Pedobaptists themselves. Thus all researches of English, German, and American linguists, have not been able to shake this result, established by Gale more than a hundred years ago, but so often caviled at and denied by partisan clamors as to be rarely recognized as a settled philological fact.

It is true, indeed, that this lexicon mentions three other uses of the word *βαπτίζω*, but they are given in the first

[1] Quæst. Mechan. c. 27. [2] Page 301.

edition as *metaphorical* phrases, not proper senses of the term, as idioms, in fact. Thus Plato,[1] "I am one of those who were *soaked in wine* (βεβαπτισμένων) yesterday." So the authors of the lexicon render it. Professor Stuart brings the same passage forward as an illustration of the figurative use of βαπτίζω in the sense of "*overwhelm.*" We have the same figure when we speak of a man being "*in wine*," meaning that his senses are metaphorically drowned in what he has drank. "*Head over ears* in debt" and "*drowned, i. e.*, with questions," are the only other figurative senses of the term they give in either edition. These can only be understood as referring to the proper sense of the word, *i. e.*, *immersion.* We have in English just the same figures, and speak of a man as immersed in cares, or in debts, in study, or in business, or of a city as plunged in sleep, or by sudden attack, into confusion and distress.[2] In fact, we now use the word *immerse* figuratively just in those cases where a Greek would have used the term βαπτίζω. This does not unsettle, but rather establish the literal meaning of the English word. Thus even the metaphorical use always confirms the literal signification of βαπτίζω, and is used on purpose to imply the *largest possible application* of a supposed fluid that the nature of the case will admit. Such, then, are the established results at the present day of all sound critical inquiries as to the classical meaning of βαπτίζω, the same substantially as those to which we have seen that Professor Stuart arrived, after elaborate investigation, when he conceded that in classic literature he could find proof but of these two senses of the term in question:

1. *To dip, plunge*, or *immerse.*
2. *To overwhelm*, literally and figuratively.

[1] Conv. 176. [2] See Jos. B. J. 4, 3, 3.

The only difference is that the later authorities do not substantiate the second of these two senses as any part of the literal or figurative meaning of the word.

Professor Robinson, in the last edition of his lexicon, gives the sense thus: "*to dip in*," "*to sink*," "*to immerse*." He says: "It is spoken of ships' galleys, etc., of horses sinking in a marsh, or partially, to the breast;" adding, "in Greek writers, as above exhibited, from Plato onward, βαπτίζω is *every where* to sink, to immerse, to overwhelm, either wholly or *partially*." As he alone speaks of this *partial* immersion in this term, a little explanation of the laws of language may be necessary to reconcile all the statements. If a man says that he has dipped his finger in water, it is true that he only professes *partially* to have immersed *himself*, but as he wholly immersed the finger, it would not be fair on this account to say that "*dip*" signified "to immerse wholly or *partially*."[1]

Besides that, however, there is a *figure of speech* to which *all* words are subject by which a part is put for the whole, and the whole for the part. It is treated of in every Rhetoric under the head of Synecdoche.[2] Our words dip, sink, immerse, are, however, quite as subject to this figurative use as βαπτίζω. If, for instance, a man told us that his horse, having got off the causeway, had *sunk* in the marsh, it would have been no contradiction if he asked assistance directly after to get him out, as his head and neck were still above the surface. We daily speak of *burying* a man, meaning only a part of the man, his body, not his soul. Sailors are not the less said to *dip* their oars into the water in rowing because they keep the handles out. Yet no one sup-

[1] See Leviticus, iv. 6, Deuteronomy, xxxiii. 24, where, however, βαπτο is used.

[2] See Campbell's Rhetoric, pp. 322, 332. Harper.

poses these *figurative* uses to disturb the *literal* or proper significations of the verbs "to *bury*," or "to *sink*," or "to *dip*."

Thus is it abundantly established that βαπτίζω means in classic Greek *to dip, to sink, to immerse, and nothing else.*

(*b.*) *New Testament use of* βαπτίζω.

The only point now left is whether, in the New Testament, the term βαπτίζω possesses some new meaning or meanings not figurative, and different from all the classic usage in regard to it. This was the ground taken by Professor Stuart, in which he has been followed by Professor Robinson, in his lexicon of the New Testament. He gives the classical signification much as Liddell and Scott, "*to dip in, to sink, to immerse, to dip in* a vessel, *to draw* water." But in the New Testament he contends that it has *quite distinct* senses; and means, "1. *To wash, to lave, to cleanse by washing*, mid. and pass. aor. 1 in mid. sense, *to wash one's self, i. e.*, one's hands or person, *to perform ablution.* 2. *To baptize, to administer the rite of baptism*, either that of John or of Christ. Pass. and mid. *to be baptized*, or to *cause one's self to be baptized, i. e.*, generally to receive baptism."

In all this he takes up the positions of Professor Stuart, defending them with, perhaps, more point, and having the advantage of going over the ground last.

Professor Stuart complains that he is "unable to find any thing in the New Testament which appears to settle whether the mode of baptism is determined by the sacred writers," although he is "quite ready to concede" that he finds no cases "which seem absolutely to determine that immersion was not practiced." Baptists, therefore, consider that he

has quite mistaken, *where lies the burden of proof*, that the New Testament was not written to settle the signification of the word baptize. But the word baptize was adopted into the New Testament because well understood to settle the nature of the command. It is not, therefore, necessary, in order to establish the meaning, that we hunt up confirmations in each case. But to *unsettle it* a different usage of the word, in each case, must be clearly proved.

The classical sense of the Greek term, which always implies immersion, was the settled and established meaning hundreds of years before the New Testament was written. The sense of βαπτίζω is not, and has no right to be, like a piece of blank paper to the scholar when he first takes up a Greek Testament, it was not so to those who wrote it. The burden of proof, then, lies on those who maintain that it is used in some special signification.

And this narrows down the whole question about the meaning of this long-disputed term to a point where any plain English reader of the Bible can, with a little help very easily obtained, settle it for himself with as much certainty as the profoundest scholar. The question is precisely this: Supposing that in every case where the Greek word βαπτίζω occurs, it had been translated *immerse*, are there any circumstances connected with the biblical[1] use of the term sufficient to *alter the sense of the English word* immerse, so that, instead of understanding it as meaning "to dip," we should have to regard it as signifying "to wash," "to lave," "to cleanse by washing," "to perform ablution." This is clearly the point at issue.

Professor Robinson's argument amounts substantially to

[1] I include under the term biblical here the Septuagint version of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, as well as the New Testament.

this. He says: "In Hellenistic usage, and especially in reference to the rite of baptism, βαπτίζω would seem to have expressed not always simply *immersion*, but the more general idea of *ablution* or *affusion*." It is proper to remark, however, that in establishing this new and more general sense of βαπτίζω, neither Philo nor Josephus assist Professor Robinson, though both of them Jews, and about cotemporaries with Christ and his Apostles. On the contrary, they always use βαπτίζω as synonymous with immersion as when Josephus, speaking of Herod murdering Aristobulus, says that he was "*plunged*" in a diving-bath until he was drowned, using βαπτίζω. The command to baptize, therefore, if not a command to immerse, was recorded in a Greek word, of which two of the most celebrated Greek Jews of that day manifest no knowledge, and the proof of which has to be made out from the Bible *alone*.

1. Professor Robinson's "*especial*" argument to establish this new meaning, is from the circumstances attending "the rite of baptism." Of this all can happily judge who consider those circumstances.

He admits that Jesus was plunged "*into*" the Jordan at his own baptism, and that the vast multitude spoken of in Matthew, iii. 6 were baptized "*in*" water, going even further in this respect than Professor Stuart, who, however, had declared: "For myself, then, I cheerfully admit that βαπτίζω in the New Testament, when applied to the rite of baptism, does in all probability involve the idea that this rite was usually performed by immersion, but not always."[1]

Professor Robinson would probably admit all this; indeed he has himself shown further that, in all cases where any prepositions are used in connection with the element of this

[1] Page 362.

rite, they show it to have been "*in*" water;[1] so that the case is narrowed down still further. We have a Greek verb that *always* implies immersion out of the Bible, which usually involves that idea even in speaking of the rite of baptism itself in the New Testament, and that, according to Professor Stuart, is *never* used in cases "which seem absolutely to determine that immersion was not practiced."[2] And yet Professor Robinson has in fact ventured entirely to expunge from his definition of βαπτίζω, when it is used in the New Testament, the established and distinctive character of the word, and substituted others in its place, explaining in a "note" at the end that he only intends to say, the word βαπτίζω "would seem not *always* to have expressed simply immersion, in Hellenistic usage, and especially in reference to the rite of baptism." If by divine authority the word "*immerse*" were placed in our English Bibles wherever βαπτίζω occurs in the original New Testament, the Septuagint, and the Apocrypha, would it be right for a missionary in the Sandwich Islands, in preparing an English New Testament Lexicon, to represent the signification of *immerse*, as Dr. Robinson has given that of this term? What should we think if he first taught the heathen that in all other English literature it signified "to plunge into some fluid," but that in *the New Testament* it meant, "1. To wash, to lave, to cleanse, by washing to perform ablution; 2. To baptize" adding, in a mere note, that he only intended to say that although "immerse" was the word used by divine authority, it would seem not always simply to dip, but "especially in reference to the rite of baptism," to have the more general idea of

[1] I mean after the verb βαπτίζω, and governing the element. [2] P. 337.

ablution or affusion. This is precisely what Professor Robinson has done.

The reader has already in § III. examined the progress of opinion as to all the circumstances attending the rite of baptism in the New Testament, and has seen that in no instance do they prove the least exception to immersion, but afford an overwhelming amount of proof that in *all cases* the primitive converts were "buried" in the waters of baptism. Rom. vi. 4.

Now while βαπτίζω and its derivatives occur about one hundred and thirty times in the New Testament, there are only three or four occasions in which it does not either literally or figuratively refer to the rite of baptism. These are Mark, vii. 4, 8; Luke, xi. 38; Heb. ix. 10. But Professor Stuart has admitted that there is nothing which seems absolutely to determine that immersion was not practiced even here. So that there is not one of these cases in which, if the reader should translate this term by some word implying immersion, he would not have a perfectly intelligible meaning, and one supported, too, by many of the highest critical authorities. These cases are therefore at once too doubtful and too few to establish a new sense upon, much less to overturn the hundred and thirty others, backed by the whole classic usage, so as to shake the meaning of a public command.

But Professor Robinson refers us to Luke, xi. 38, which might be literally rendered, "The Pharisee wondered because he did not first *immerse* himself (ἐβαπτίσθη) before dinner." The Syriac here uses the same word as for the rite of baptism. According to it, the host "was surprised that he did not previously baptize." Before introducing a new sense like "*wash*," instead of "immerse," it might be

well to consider if allusion was not had to the use of the bath, so customary before dinner. "Those who had been invited to a feast bathed themselves before they went," says Campbell, in his Notes on John, xiii. 10. But our Saviour seems to have been invited while publicly teaching in the neighborhood, and going in, he reclined at once at the table ready for the meal. The host had probably expected that he would have used the bath at his house, and was surprised, especially coming from the dust and the heated crowd among whom he had been laboring.

But it must also be borne in mind that this man is expressly mentioned as a Pharisee, on purpose evidently to account in part for his surprise, a surprise purposely given to enable Christ to reprove the Pharisaic observances as to ceremonial purity. "Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup," etc.

By the Mosaic law, whoever touched a dead body was unclean, (even the dead body of a mouse,) or a grave, or the bone of a man; and whoever touched one who was unclean, or an unclean garment or article of furniture, also became unclean. The law for all such was that they should "*bathe themselves in water.*" Lev. xv. 5–18; Numb. xix. 18, 19. Even the High Priest offering the yearly atonement was subjected to this rule. How carefully the Pharisees regarded this as enjoining an immersion of the whole body, we shall see. But in addition to the Mosaic law, they had also added certain cases of *constructive*, or probable uncleanness. If a man had been to the *market-place*, where flesh was on every side, or any place of public resort, where ceremonially unclean persons (Gentiles, for instance) must have abounded, special care was taken to purify themselves on returning home. Mark, vii. 4. Spencer, on the "Ritual Laws of the

Hebrews," says, "Some of the Jews, ambitious for the credit of superior purity, frequently immersed their whole persons in water, the greater part, however, following a milder discipline, frequently washed only their hands." Hhan[1] says, "Those who had departed from the house washed in a bath, or at least immersed their hands in water with the fingers distended." Grotius on Mark, vii. 4, says, "They cleansed themselves more carefully from defilement contracted at the market, by not only washing their hands, but even by immersing their bodies." Vatabulus, on the same passage, says, "They bathed their whole persons."[2]

It seems, then, that there were *two* customs—the stricter Pharisees, after going into a promiscuous assembly, would have bathed themselves before eating. How particular they were, may be gathered from what Maimonides says, as quoted by Dr. Lightfoot, on Mark, vii. 4: "Wherever in the law washing of the body or garments is mentioned, it means nothing else than the washing of the whole body. For if any wash himself all over except the top of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness."

This seems by our Saviour's remark to have been one of the stricter Pharisees. He had conceived of our Lord as a person of extraordinary purity and holiness, hence his surprise would be natural at his reclining for dinner after mixing with the crowd, without first bathing himself.

This passage is certainly far enough from favoring, much less requiring, the creation of a new sense for *βαπτίζω*. Before doing so, it would be our duty to regard this as an in-

[1] Section 320.

[2] For the above extracts, I am chiefly indebted to Professor Ripley's excellent Reply to Professor Stuart.

stance of the rhetorical figure of which we have before spoken, in which the whole is sometimes put for a part, to save detail. We daily speak of a man washing *himself*, where we mean only that he has washed his face, or even his hands. This does not alter the meaning of the verb *wash;* it is only a figurative use of "himself" for "his hands." So here, if the surprise of the Pharisee was only occasioned by the Saviour not *dipping his hands* in water —a still more frequent custom with all the Jews—the literal meaning of βαπτίζω would remain quite unchanged. The same figure of speech would have to be supposed by whatever word was rendered.

But Professor Robinson tells us to "compare the like circumstances in Mark, vii. 2, 3," where he considers that νίπτομαι is used synonymously with βαπτίζω.

The whole of this supposition, however, Dr. Campbell has shown most clearly to arise from the want of a sufficient discrimination, where *a contrast* is intended. "For illustrating this passage," he says, in the note on this text, "let it be observed first, that the two verbs rendered *wash* in the English translation are different in the original. The first is νίψωνται, properly translated '*wash;*' the second is βαπτίζωνται, which limits us to a particular mode of washing; for βαπτίζω denotes 'to plunge,' 'to dip.'"

He translates the passage in question thus: "The Pharisees, and indeed all the Jews who observe the tradition of the elders, eat not until they have washed their hands, by pouring a little water upon them (νίψωνται); and if they be come from the market, by dipping them (βαπτίζωνται)." "Νίπτειν," he says, "like the general word *to wash*, in English, may be used for βαπτίζειν, *to dip*, because the genus comprehends the species, but not conversely, βαπ-

τίζειν for νίπτειν, the species for the genus. By this interpretation, the words which, as rendered in the common version, are unmeaning, appear both significant and emphatical, and the contrast in the Greek is preserved in the translation. The Vulgate does not confound the two verbs as the English does."

That there is a contrast of thought or a very marked distinction intended to be indicated by the use of these two Greek words both rendered in English, "*wash*," nearly all translators and commentators have agreed. Precisely what that distinction is has perplexed many. The Syriac says "The Pharisees except they carefully *wash* their hands, do not eat; and from the market place they do not eat except they *baptize*." So the Vulgate. It is plain that the kind of washing here indicated by βαπτίζω is of a much more thorough character than by νίπτω. Bloomfield admits that in the latter case it refers to the washing of their *bodies* in opposition to that of their *hands*, though he will not allow that this was by *immersion*. But certainly to *bathe* as the easiest way of washing the whole body, especially in those Eastern countries, would be the probable sense even apart from the meaning of the word itself. The most literal rendering of this passage would be "The Pharisees except they *wash* their hands, eat not. And when they come from the market, except they *immerse*, they eat not," and the only question ought to be whether we are to suppose the words "*their hands*" are left to be understood as repeated after the word "immerse" or not. The sole objection to this is that of Kuinoel and others who do not find what they imagine sufficient proof of such a general custom as complete immersion, but think with Campbell that the dipping was confined to the hands. We have, however, already

seen the customs on this point from which it would appear that the laxer Jews and those who went but a little way, merely immersed their *hands*, but the stricter sort of Pharisees, especially when they went into the *markets* or promiscuous crowds where there was danger of defilement unless they "washed *in* a bath," *i. e.*, immersed themselves in water, did not eat. But no distinct object of the verb being expressed, we might suppose "their hands," the object of νίψωνται, to be here also the understood object of βαπτίζωνται. What is certain is all that is necessary. The distinction between the two modes of ablution is here strongly marked by the terms used. The same distinction is accurately laid down in the Mishna. The Jews, it is clear, had two distinct modes of washing for purification, one by pouring, and the other by immersion. They were discussed in separate Treatises. The Treatise Yadaim being apparently devoted exclusively to the ablution of the hands by *pouring* so much water upon them, and several other Treatises to *immersion*.[1] So far, therefore, from this passage being favorable to a more general sense to the term βαπτίζω, whichever way it is construed, it demonstrates a very specific use of the word, implies immersion most strongly, and is put in *contrast* with νίπτω, *to wash*.

The reader will probably be surprised to learn that upon two cases like these, where alone in the New Testament this verb occurs apart from the rite of baptism, Dr. Robinson has undertaken to erase from his definitions the specific sense of "immerse" from βαπτίζω wherever it occurs in this portion of holy writ. It is true, however, we have three instances of the noun, now to be considered.

Mark, vii. 4 and 8, may seem, perhaps, the strongest to

[1] See "Eighteen Treat. from the Mishna," by Dr. Raphall, Lond., p. 357.

the mere English reader. "And many other things there be which they have received to hold as the *washing* (βαπτισμοὺς) of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and of tables," etc. So our English version reads.

Here again the Syriac has it the *baptism* of cups, etc. And so Campbell renders it, because this baptism of them was of a *religious* and ceremonial character; a Pharisaic observance added to the Mosaic law. The reader will easily find proofs of two distinct kinds of religious purification, both for persons and things, one was by *pouring* water over the object, and the other by *immersion* in water. Both are laid down with great exactness in the Mishna. The first as we have seen might be represented by νίπτω, the second most appropriately by βαπτίζω. The question here is whether there is any thing to prove the more thorough ablution not intended, so that we must alter the meaning of the word to accommodate the sense. A little consideration will show that the proof is all the other way.

So far as the baptism of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels are concerned, there can at least be no difficulty in supposing immersion. Even the law of Moses had prescribed that the dead body of any animal or creeping thing touching any vessel or garment, or skin, or sack, it must be *dipped in water* before it would be clean, and a vessel in which any work had been done must be immersed in like manner. Lev. xi. 32.

But it was some washing much more inconvenient and less founded on the nature of things than all this, that the Evangelist here charges on the Pharisees.[1]

[2] Dr. Gill, in his commentary on this passage, has shown how exacting were the Pharisees in requiring all vessels to be covered with water for constructive uncleanness.

The word rendered "*tables*" means strictly *couches* (κλινῶν), and it has been asked, could the Jews have been in the habit of immersing whole couches? But this difficulty soon vanishes from an oriental mind.

1. Let it be observed that these couches were used instead of chairs to recline upon while eating; and the food and gravy constantly spilled on them would render them frequently unclean, literally and ceremonially.

2. The Jews were in the habit of distinguishing between the couch itself and the *bedstead*,[1] or elevated part of the floor, as it generally was, on which the couch proper was laid. In Persia, to this day, this latter consists at times only of "*two cotton quilts*" easily spread.[2] This accounts for the couch being so easily carried by one who had been paralytic.[3] These would often need dipping *in* water to be ceremonially clean if animal matter touched them.

3. The object of the writer was to set forth the *absurd* lengths to which the Pharisees enjoined these cleansings, and it has been shown by Dr. Gill that they required the whole to be cleansed by *immersion* when they had been defiled; nothing, therefore, can well be more certain than that superfluous immersions of this kind were specifically intended; for the object of the writer would be best accomplished by exhibiting the *full extent* of their troublesome requirements.

Hebrews, ix. 10, refers doubtless, to the frequent instituted dippings in water, both of persons, vessels, clothes, and skins, ordained Lev. xi. 32. 15. 5–18, etc., for ceremonial purification. This was the evident design of the writter; *i. e.*, to show the inconveniences of the Jewish religion and its inadaptedness to perpetuity and universal ex-

[1] Deut. iii. 11. [2] See Robinson's Calmut, Beds. [3] Matt. ix. 6.

tension. The above are *the only* reasons from the New Testament adduced by Professor Robinson, apart from the rite of baptism, already considered, for changing the meaning of the word βαπτίζω. Closely and fairly examined, instead of altering the sense of βαπτίζω, they all tend directly to confirm it.

But Dr. R. pleads that there are cases in the Apocrypha and Septuagint, at least, where βαπτίζω is used, and in which the idea of immersion is inapplicable. It is even urged that these are sufficient to establish a peculiar Hellenistic usage and meaning of the term, existing before the New Testament.

But it is not pleaded that all these cases together are sufficient to show that the *common* Hellenistic usage was not the same as the classical meaning "immerse." Indeed Professor Stuart gives us the primary and usual meaning of the word in these writings, *to plunge, to immerse, to dip in*, quoting[1] "Naaman went down and plunged (ἐβαπτίσατο) seven times into the river Jordan," as an instance. He even says that in the "majority of examples" of this verb and βάπτω, that is the sense. The exceptional cases, "which are few in number,"[2] are given. All of these are quite insufficient to disturb the sense of βαπτίζω, in an ordinary command, however regarded.

But Professor Robinson, strange to say, less conceding here than Professor Stuart, brings forward 2 Kings, v. 14, to prove that the term is *not* used in the specific sense of "*immerse*," but in the more general one of "*wash*," quoting in proof verse 10, where the command under which he acted was given to go and *wash* (λούω) seven times in Jordan. Thus instead of letting the *specific* term explain the more general one, he wishes the more general term to un-

[1] 2 Kings, v. 14. [2] Page 307.

settle the whole usage of the more specific. Is this right? What could not be unsettled on such principles? This is the more inexcusable, as in his Hebrew Lexicon (Art. טבל) he has given this very passage[1] as an illustration of the meanings "to dip, to immerse," translating it in full, "and *dipped* himself seven times in Jordan."

But supposing λούω in the direction given simply meant to "*wash*," then verse 14 tells us specifically how this washing was actually performed, *i. e.*, by immersion. The command here, however, implied immersion. For λοῦσαι ἑπτάκις ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ should be rendered "*bathe* thyself seven times *in* Jordan." Trench in his "Synonymes of the New Testament," says that λούω "is not so much to '*wash*' as to '*bathe*,' and λούεσθαι, to bathe one's self,' implies always not the bathing of a part of the body, but *of the whole*," quoting Hebrews, x., 23, as an example. Nothing, therefore, can well be more clear, than the specific sense both of the command, and of βαπτίζω here.

Judith, xii. 7, is adduced by Professor Robinson as by Professor Stuart. The passage is translated in King James' version, Judith "went out in the night into the Valley of Bethulia, and *washed* herself (ἐβαπτίζετο) in a fountain by the camp." The question here is, did the writer intend to say that she bathed herself *in* the fountain, or simply that she washed herself *with* its water. The point is not which of these circumstances really took place. Probably neither of them did, for the whole passage is an evident and most improbable fiction. Nothing can be more unlikely than that a Jewish woman should have been allowed to pass in and out of a camp besieging a Jewish city, at her own pleasure. Hence we may, if we will, think it very unlikely

[1] 2 Kings, v. 14.

and indecorous, that she should immerse herself. It is not so much so as other parts of this romance, but the translator's duty is to put the improbable thing in English, just as it stands in the story.

The object of the writer is to represent her as a person of rare piety, according to the Pharisaic standard, but living in the midst of a camp of unclean persons, and surrounded by ceremonial defilements. Hence this custom of nightly bathing is mentioned, the fountain being also carefully recorded to give plausibility to the narrative, and also that it was *by night*, when she would not be observed. There were often such places at the outskirts of cities, with proper and separate accommodations for men and women to bathe. In the sixth century conveniences of this kind at the Pool of Siloam were found by Antonius the Martyr. Still it was urged that this was "in (ἐν) the camp," and at night. The utmost that can, however, be argued from that circumstance, is, that it was somewhere probably *within*, but possibly only *near* the space inclosed by sentries, a circuit perhaps of *miles*, and in which this seems to have been a secluded and solitary valley. The supposition of a lone woman, and perhaps her maid, going out and in at night to wash at a fountain, in a camp, must have been attended with about as many difficulties, as to delicacy and safety, as if we suppose her to have *bathed*. But there is this difficulty to the former supposition—it was not *cleanliness*, but peculiar ceremonial *sanctity*, that is here being represented, and when in verse 19 it is expressly said that "*she came in clean*"—that is, ceremonially clean—there is no room to doubt that she bathed her body in the water, according to Jewish custom. Spencer, in his "Laws of the Hebrews," brings this very case forward to prove that "the Jews when

about to perform their vows, sometimes cleansed the whole body in a bath." Living as she was by day, in the midst of the unclean, she could only have made clean Pharisaically by immersing nightly. This supposition is necessary to the *plausibility* of the narrative, and we are not even bound to believe in the *probability* of any part of the story.

The only other case adduced is Sirach, xxxi. 25, [or Ecclus: xxxiv. 25] "He who is *baptized* (*βαπτιζομενος*) from a dead body, and toucheth it again, what does he profit by his *bath* or bathing," *τῷ λουτρῷ αὐτοῦ*. In Numbers, xix. 19, we find that whoever touched the body, or even the bone of a man, was to be unclean seven days, and as the concluding ceremony of his purification, "*to bathe himself in water.*"

Let it be granted that רָחַץ, the Hebrew term for "*bathe*," here might mean less than immerse. Yet followed as it is by בְּ, which here must be rendered "*in*," it is clear what it meant in the eyes of the son of Sirach. His speaking of the "bath" in the same verse, makes it plain. And the following passage produced by Lightfoot, in Matthew, iii. 6, from Maimonides, renders all these passages beyond further dispute. "Wheresoever in the law washing of the body or garments is mentioned, it means nothing else than *the washing of the whole body.* For if any wash himself all over, except the very top of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness." Lightfoot on Mark, vii. 4, produces also from another Jewish writer a sentence which shows that pollution occasioned by the touch of the dead was so great that the person "must *plunge* his whole body."[1] The specific sense is plain beyond doubt, here.

[1] Ripley, p. 33. If it were the fact, which it is *not*, that reference here is had to the custom of *washing the whole of the clothes in water*, see Leviticus, xi. 25–28, as well as the immersion of the person, the

Thus, in fact, not a single passage has been adduced, in which less than the primary idea of the word "immersion" can be accorded to it, without positive detraction from the meaning of the original, either in the New Testament, the Septuagint, or the Apocrypha.[1]

Thus every use of the word, classic or Hellenistic, literal or figurative, contributes to show that *the command to baptize is a command to immerse*, and that the word *βαπτίζω*, is *never* used literally (or even figuratively) without reference to this, the radical idea of the word, so that our verb to dip is its perfect equivalent.

etymology of כבס shows that it is to *wash* by treading the garments in a trough filled with water, therefore implying immersion.

[1] The fact to which Robinson alludes of the old Italic version transferring *baptize* into the Latin, certainly does not show that there was any thing in the method of performing the rite which "*immergo*" would not properly indicate; but simply that this word having been used first, had become a technical term in that language, through the preaching of the Apostles, and was thus naturally transferred as a thousand other such words are. Tertullian and all the Latin fathers at least continually use "*Tingere*" and "*Imergere.*" The baptismal fonts still found among the ruins of the most ancient Greek Churches in Palestine, as at Tekoa and Gophna, and going back apparently to very early times, are quite too late to affect this question. No one pretends that they belong to the first or even to the second centuries of the Christian era. They have nothing, therefore, to do with the question of the alteration which he has made of the meaning of the word *βαπτίζω* in the New Testament. That the general custom of the early Church was immersion is too clear to be doubted; nor can a single case be shown of any thing else up to A.D. 230; later than this it was in fierce dispute whether less than that was valid baptism, even in cases of the sick and dying. The fonts are beyond doubt too late to weigh in this matter, but the ancient custom of baptistries built separately from the churches is decisive the other way, for had sprinkling originally been the customary baptism none would have thought of erecting a house for that purpose.

The case is in every way, therefore, as plain as that supposed at the commencement of this chapter.[1] It is in fact *plainer*. To put it fairly, it should be stated thus: The commanding officer of a vessel tells one of the hands to "dip a bucket overboard." He pleads that the meaning of "dip" is uncertain, and that Milton uses it for "moisten." The officer, therefore, tells him to "dip it *in* the water" and the man complains that "in" does not always mean "within" or "into."

The commander sets him an *example* and dips the bucket down "*into*" [εἰς] the river, Mar. i. 9, and shows him thousands of cases in which it is dipped "*in*" [ἐν] the same water, Matt. iii. 6. But he still replies that all these instances do not prove that the command might not as well be performed in some other way. The object for which the order was given is pointed out to the man, clearly implying immersion.

Finally, the history of the word itself is gone into, and it is shown that literally and properly the term "*dip*" always involves an "immersion;" or if it ever have another sense (which βαπτίζω never has), it is so remote as not to affect the case, and that in the order in question, the verb to *dip* means to *immerse*, or it means *nothing*.

And so the command given us by the Captain of our Salvation to be baptized, is a command to be immersed, if it is any thing.

The question discussed in this chapter is not at all as to the *importance* of baptism; that will be treated of elsewhere. It is not as to whether we are responsible for understanding it, or whether we may or may not be sincerely *mistaken;* that depends upon each man's knowledge or

[1] See pp. 143, 4.

means of knowing the truth. The simple question we have discussed throughout is, *what is the meaning of the command itself?*

We are far, indeed, from intending to represent, even by the illustration introduced, that our Pedobaptist brethren would *intentionally* use any such subtleties in regard to a Divine ordinance so obvious, if the case stood before them in their native tongue as plainly, and with the same authority, that it does in the original. But it has been for the purpose of illustrating the difficulties that have been artificially, however sincerely, thrown around a very plain question, as well as the progress toward their removal made during the last hundred years, that this slight figure has been used. In the niceties of a dead language there are continual plausibilities and incentives to the exercise of ingenuity that beguile the most candid and learned to an incalculable extent. And as a generous and zealous counsel will fully persuade himself of the truth and justice of some cause that he has volunteered to defend, when no impartial person, with the same knowledge of the facts, would trust in it for a moment; and from believing it himself, will make use of remote subtleties that it will take much patient thought to unravel; so in the order of defending sprinkling, plausibilities have sometimes been assumed for facts, and exceptions for rules, in regard to the construction of a very simple command in Greek: which, stripped of a learned disguise, and put into the language in which both parties are accustomed to think and to speak, would at once appear to all, inconsistences the most strange and inconceivable.

CHAPTER II.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BELIEVERS' BAPTISM.

§ I. General View of the Subject.

All that large, respectable, and increasing class of Pedobaptists who concede the points previously discussed, and yet do not yield their personal adhesion and obedience to the ordinance of believers' baptism, justify themselves on the ground that they do not esteem the matter one of sufficient *importance*. They admit the command originally given was to immerse, but say that sprinkling will *do as well;* that a drop is as well-pleasing as an ocean to Him who reads the heart. Baptism, they concede, was instituted as a profession of personal faith in Christ, but they think the ratification of faith *afterward* will do as well. We have seen from the concessions of Pedobaptists what the command is; the point now at issue between them and the Baptists is whether we are at liberty to deviate from it.

But here the Baptist pleads at once that *a command from which we are at liberty to deviate, is to us no command at all.* It is only advice at best, and not always that. If the injunction, for instance, be conditional, then, in the absence of those conditions, it ceases to enjoin. There are, Baptists admit, Christians to whom the command of baptism does not apply. Persons converted on a death-bed are cases of this sort. In these instances, the best respect that can be shown to the ordinance is to let it alone, as Christ himself taught us in the case of the dying thief, but certainly not to

admit the command as binding and then substitute something else instead. That lowers down, by example, the whole tone of Christian piety and obedience. The Saviour did not, as a Papist would have done, command some of the women that stood by bewailing to fetch a little water, nor the beloved disciple, to whom he committed his mother, to asperse the quivering penitent. Thus he taught us that it is more acceptable to him to avow a general direction to be no command to us in certain cases, than to substitute something else in its place for the sake of a *quasi* fulfillment of the command. All this forms no real exception; it only narrows the question down to this: Is it important to obey a command of Christ when we know it to be applicable to us? Thus viewed, it seems beyond discussion, appealing too directly to the moral sense. It may, however, be illustrated by parallel circumstances of moral obligation.

Herein consists the speciality of positive institutions. Moral commands rest simply upon inherent relations, but positive institutions simply upon the authority of the lawgiver. If the injunction had been to do "some *great thing*,"[1] in which could have been traced some connection with the good to be effected, men would probably, like Naaman, be more willing to comply. We may obey moral injunctions because we see our interests bound up in them. But positive commands test the principle simply of *obedience* to Divine *authority*. To say that one institution of Christ is of no importance, cuts at the root of all ordinances, as they rest simply upon the same basis; throws us back for all our religion upon our moral philosophy and eternal relations; and strikes at all revelation. For if nothing in religion is to be binding, on the authority of God, until we

[1] 2 Kings, v. 13.

can first see the wisdom of it, even a Divine command is nothing but advice. We must be prepared to substitute the tenth day for rest and worship instead of the Sabbath, if a French philosopher can show that the decimal system is more advantageous. The Lord's Supper, the ministry, the Church, all must be subject to the refining crucible of a utilitarian philosophy, or the newest fashion of supposed convenience.

Within the last twenty years the whole principle, or want of principle, on which this supposed non-importance of believers' baptism rests, has received the most signal rebuke in the rise and temporary success of Puseyism. For what is it, if weighed, but the panting of earnest, if self-righteous, hearts for a religion of positive institutions. It is the rebounding of the popular mind from the excess of laxity and indifference as to ordinances, into the old extreme of superstition. But the laxity arose out of the contradiction between an evangelical faith and infant baptism. This the "North British Review" has shown in passages before quoted.

No wonder Episcopacy gains ground in New England. Men want a religion of positive institutions, and not one of which each part in turn, except some abstract faith, is declared every Sabbath from the pulpit, and in every act, a matter of no importance.

Does St. Paul make the sacraments of religion unimportant in their places? Does he not say, "I praise you, brethren, that *ye keep the ordinances as I delivered them unto you?*"

Much has been said of the undue stress laid by Baptists upon correctness in regard to a ceremony. But while modern evangelical Pedobaptists are thus blaming them on one side, the Church of Rome and millions of Protestants

are more violent against them on the other. Baptists at least occupy a consistent medium. The vast majority of those who uphold infant sprinkling, do so from an exaggerated and idolatrous belief that the magical efficacy and power of baptism make those who receive it, "members of Christ, and heirs of heaven," by an *opus operatum*. This was the ancient extreme, against which for centuries Baptists protested. But now they are assailed on the other hand by a large body of Christians falling into just the opposite error, and accounting all the sacraments of religion as of no importance.

The contests of all Protestant Churches with Rome, on the subject of the Lord's Supper, render certain the ultimate progress of that principle on which rests the importance of believers' baptism. These Churches have all agreed as to the necessity of upholding the Lord's Supper, and of keeping it as it was delivered unto them. What reproaches have not been heaped upon the Roman Catholics for presuming to alter it by taking away the wine from the laity. But then is it not at least equally blameworthy in Protestants to have kept back the immersion from baptism. Supposing that, instead of bread and wine, a church should substitute, of its own notion, other elements, such as potatoes and milk, none would feel more shocked at it, we are persuaded, than those very brethren who are most active in advocating a substitution of sprinkling for the original immersion. If it should be urged that the word "supper" admitted of the proposed articles as well as those which have always been used, would that be sufficient to reconcile Christians to the alteration? But while there may easily be a supper of other substances than bread and wine, the very term *baptism* necessitates an immersion.

But the importance of a rigid adherence to positive precepts may well be illustrated from the effects of one of the best intentioned deviations in regard to baptism itself upon the whole doctrine of the early Churches. Sprinkling was substituted first for immersion through "*Clinic Baptism*," or the baptism of those reclining on couches by reason of extreme sickness. For the sake of these, first pouring and then aspersion were introduced at about the middle of the third century. But then this was, by many, esteemed no baptism at all, and Cyprian, the great early defender of infant baptism had to plead earnestly in vindication of its sufficiency in extreme cases. And still many nicknamed such persons "*Clinics instead of Christians*." The feeling on this point was very strong against Cyprian in the Churches, and he cheerfully conceded that if any of the pastors deemed it invalid, they could, without any breach of good fellowship, or charge of *anabaptism*, do—just what we do, immerse them afterward.

Bingham says,[1] "As to the question about the validity of Clinic baptism, that is, whether persons who were only sprinkled with water in their beds in time of sickness, and not immersed or washed all over the body in baptism, were to be looked upon as complete Christians; Cyprian, for his own part, resolves it in the affirmative. But yet if any bishops were otherwise persuaded *that it was not lawful baptism*, and upon that ground gave such persons a new immersion, he professes that he prescribes to none, but leaves every one to act according to his own judgment and discretion." This case was about A.D. 250. Doubtless many a sick man on his dying bed desired much to profess his Saviour in baptism, and it appealed strongly to the heart

[1] Book 2, chap. vii. sec. v.

and imagination of Christian charity to bestow it, even at the expense of deviating from the rule. It was a strong case. And yet we may *now* see that, had those early Christians told such dying penitents the story of the thief upon the cross instead, and shown them that such cases were doubtless left on purpose to bear witness against all idolatry of the outward signs, and to show that *baptism was not a saving ordinance*, it would have been a most timely protest, and probably have saved after generations an awful revelation of the man of sin. Sacerdotalism would have been stifled at its birth, and Roman Catholicism been averted.[1]

Were Pedobaptists faithfully to restore the original institution, and immerse their candidates, it would soon put an end to infant baptism. Nothing but adult baptism would then be tolerated.

The importance of keeping the ordinances as they were

[1] It was at this time and for long after, a generally understood rule, however, that those who had received only clinic baptism were to be held forever after as incapable of being ordained to any office in the church. The Council of Neocesarea especially ordains this, A.D. 312. It has been said that it was only to mark disapprobation of such as had *delayed* baptism till sickness. But the account given by Cornelius, A.D. 251, of the ordination of Novatus shows that it was at first rather from doubts as to the lawfulness, and, in many minds, the *validity* of such baptisms. Speaking of that ordination, he says, "All the clergy and many of the laity resisted it, since it was not lawful that one who had been baptized in his sick bed *by aspersion* as he was, should be promoted to the order of the clergy. The bishop, however, requested that it should be granted to him to ordain only the one." Describing his baptism, Cornelius says, "Being supposed at the point of death he was baptized by aspersion in the bed on which he lay, *if indeed it be proper to say that one like him did receive baptism.*" (Eusebius, Book 6, chap. xliii.) Such is, perhaps, the earliest distinct instance of clinic baptism on record given in the language of a cotemporary.

delivered, may be illustrated again from the practical tendency of the contrary course to destroy all the sacramental part of religion. This has been exhibited during the last hundred years. The open neglect of infant baptism is obvious, and has awakened the attention of the Pedobaptist Churches in New England. But the decline of attention to all the admitted requirements of positive religion is not sufficiently felt. There are vast multitudes of men who are generally considered, and indulge the hope themselves, that they are Christians, but yet live for years without making *any* profession of religion, without any baptism, or any communion, without family prayer, with but a meager attendance at public worship, and but a lax observance of the Sabbath. The proportion of such persons is increasing through the regions of evangelical Pedobaptism, and the secret of all this is lax views of the importance of positive religion.

Directly ministers begin to argue as an excuse for disobeying a divine command, that "a drop is as good as an ocean," it is not difficult to foresee that their people will carry it one step further, and say, "None is as good as a drop." It may not at once be said, or in so many words; it may only manifest itself in action, or the want of action, but the inference will soon be drawn. The tendency of the whole is to Quakerism. Now, as in man the soul and body are united, and neither can operate in the present state without the other, so is it in religion. God has clothed the spiritual essence of faith and love with a corporeity of symbol and sacrament from which they can not be separated without death ensuing.

§ II. The Teachings and Professions of Christian Baptism Important.

The first great lesson of Christian baptism is that personal allegiance, and an implicit submission to the religion of the New Testament, lies at the entrance of a pure Christianity.

About fifty years ago, an officer of the French army, a gentleman of distinguished connections, was taken prisoner in the war between France and England, brought to Liverpool, and put upon his parole. Strolling one fine Sabbath afternoon, in company with some brother officers in the same situation with himself, outside the city, he saw a company gathered round a small sheet of water, where baptism was about to be administered. Curiosity led him to approach, when he perceived some boys annoying those present, by throwing pebbles into the water. There were several ladies going to be baptized, and, Frenchman-like, a feeling of gallantry induced him to persuade his brother officers to join with him, and form a "guard of honor" round the water. He could not understand much English, but he soon gathered that these persons were consecrating themselves to the service of their Saviour. He noticed also that the minister, a gentleman of superior education, appealed to the *New Testament* as the foundation of all that he said and did; not to the authority of the Church, not to reason, but to *the words of Christ* and his Apostles.

Brought up in Paris during the fervor of the first French Revolution, not only was he an utter infidel himself, but he did not know that any persons of education now believed the New Testament. He supposed that Christianity might do to amuse children and uneducated people, but that no

intelligent persons in the nineteenth century believed the New Testament to be true.

His chief surprise was that the minister, candidates, and people, all so evidently considered the words of Christ and his Apostles to be of binding authority in this matter. So deep was the impression thus made, that he resolved to do what he never had done, "read the New Testament for himself." From the moment he began, the truthfulness of the narrative became to him unquestionable. The majesty and authority of the words of Christ laid hold upon his heart. He read on and on, retired for a fortnight from the company of his fellow officers, and at last, to save himself from further interruptions, wrote a card, and fastened it on the door of his own room—"M. De —— engaged reading the New Testament." He rose from the study of that book a converted man, and soon was himself buried with Christ by baptism.

At first, his friends would ridicule the New Testament in his presence. But he soon silenced them thus: "Gentlemen, have you ever read this book?" "No." "But I have, and it is not what you imagine. Read it through, and then ridicule it as much as you please. But, until then, unless you wish personally to hurt me, ridicule it no more." In that way, by the earnest conviction of its divine authority which had first impressed him at the water's edge, he persuaded at least one brother officer to read that blessed book, who also became a Christian, and united with the same Church.

In his youth, the writer of these pages remembers well to have seen him. Kind, gentlemanly, polished to the highest degree, he became bold, earnest, and active as a Christian, beyond most around him. From being a soldier

under the greatest of earthly generals and potentates, he became a soldier under the Captain of Salvation. So strong was his attachment to his religion and his religious friends, that, on the restoration of peace, his brother, who became Keeper of the Seals of France, procured him an appointment as consul at one of the English ports. Throughout the whole remainder of a long life, but recently closed, he retained, to a singular degree, and with a touching fidelity the impression, first made at those baptismal waters, that an implicit allegiance of heart and life to Jesus Christ, and submission to the system of religion taught in the New Testament alone is Christianity. He was never ordained. But, while French consul, he opened his house each day and conducted worship, preaching to his family, and such private friends and countrymen as his station gathered round him.[1] Meeting on one occasion with a note which pleased him, written by a pastor to a member of his Church, he addressed him a letter, such as one of the Christians of early times might be supposed to have written to another. "Dear Sir and Brother," it began: "I shall not apologize for troubling you with this letter. If you are a true minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, as I take you to be, you will be glad to aid a brother soldier in his great conflict." He then narrated the history of his conversion, and requested a correspondence, which continued for about twenty years.

Having invited the minister to come and visit him; he had, like Peter, calculated the hour of his arrival, made an appointment for service, sent and gathered his friends and

[1] His ignorance of denominations and parties produced great simplicity of character and address.

acquaintances, employing even the bell-man of the town to give the matter publicity.

Visiting London, the minister insisted that he should preach an evening lecture to the congregation. With broken English, but a heart full of love to Christ, he took for his text those words of the Saviour, "Follow me." This, he said, was *the word of command* given by the great Captain of our salvation. He frankly spoke then of his own former life as a soldier, and how he had been led into allegiance and obedience to Christ, proceeding to show that this was a Captain who was never conquered, but went forth conquering and to conquer, on which account He had a right to say "Follow me;" a Captain who had never retreated an inch of ground, and therefore He said "Follow me"—who had never lost a soldier—who had never bidden one to go where he had not gone before, but through peril, and temptation, through suffering and death, had led the way, and therefore said "*Follow me.*" His broken English, his military air, his sharp accent, as he gave out, over and again, "the word of command," left deep the impression on many a heart that night, that he had learned the great lesson of baptism at that water's side, as but few even of Christ's followers learn it—that *implicit obedience and allegiance to Jesus Christ is the first requisite of Christianity.*

This is *the* great lesson needed by the present age, both practically and speculatively. Where the outward profession of Christianity costs no suffering—where a certain measured amount of respect for religion, and profession of it, is highly reputable, half-heartedness is the great practical besetting sin of us all. And now when Roman Catholicism and Puseyism on the one side are putting the authority and customs of the Church above the New Testament, and

when infidelity in all its forms and shades on the other, is putting above it the reason and moral philosophies of the day, there is no lesson of Christian truth more *central*, more Catholic and valuable than this, that an unfeigned, practical, and implicit loyalty to that system of religion which Christ and his Apostles gave us—that, and nothing else *is* Christianity.

Jesus Christ demands our allegiance to himself personally. Even one of the disciples of Socrates remarked that he perceived so much that was wise and excellent in all those sayings which he did understand, that he felt assured that those which he did not were equally valuable. Beyond this, whether the Christian can see the reasonableness or not of the sayings and commands of the Saviour, he knows it is his duty to receive them as true, and obey them as divine—to own allegiance to Christ as the Eternal Word and the King of kings. The soldier on the field of battle does not stop to argue whether the orders of his general are wise, and much less if they will lead him out of danger, but carries out the prescribed system, and obeys with a high feeling of honor and allegiance. So the true Christian carries out the Christian discipline as a system of life, and obeys Christ the great Captain of his salvation.

Thus true baptism teaches men a holy personal devotedness to that system of religion which Christ and His Apostles gave, in distinction from Roman Catholic views of Church authority on the one hand, and the cold moralities of a mere skeptical philosophy on the other.

The importance of Christian baptism appears again in this, that it instructs each believer in the original and divinely appointed summary and confession of the Christian Faith.

We live in an age remarkable for the formation, not so much of new sects, but of new parties that embrace the most vital portions of old denominations. And the sects, at present, will remain for the mechanical arrangements and organization of religious worship, but there are new general principles, new affinities, and repulsions now becoming far stronger than those of the creeds which marked the distinctions of two hundred years ago, and so much more important are these becoming with the moving spirits of the age, that the merging of many sects is a mere question of time; and the reconstruction of Christians on broader and more comprehensive principles, both of faith and charity than is recognized by mere sectarians, is inevitable.

In the midst of this anarchy preceding reconstruction, Christian baptism, truly considered, is rendered increasingly important by every movement of the age; as instructing each candidate into living views—and an *ex animo* confession of the fundamental principles of Christianity by baptizing them into the faith of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The commission inserts the creed of the Church, the rock upon which it was founded. And short as the words are, there is couched under these three mysterious names, as here used, all that is essential in Christianity; so that every one who rightly and in his heart receives and embraces them, has therein all the elements of the Christian religion, and is fit for Church membership; while no one not thus receiving them is worthy. Mere assent to the words is nothing one way or the other, but the vital assent of the heart is the essence of Christianity.

What is it, for instance, to be baptized into the name of the Father! and why is this made the first requisite of the

heavenly system? Because as the realization of the Fatherly character of God is the greatest requisite of all true piety; so the avowal of this realization by that living faith which gives alone *vitality* to all the teachings of natural religion, is made the first part of the Christian profession. When a man can lay his hand upon his heart and say, "Now I believe—now I feel that God is my Father and that I am His child—from Him I have derived a new and holy life—He has breathed into me the filial spirit—I commune with Him through prayer as my Great Father in heaven—I love and look up to Him, depending on Him in all things, and being governed by His will and pleasure supremely; and I know that He loves and watches over me—that His Providence is disciplining me, and His hand guiding all my affairs"—that man has rightly learned this first article of the Christian creed; this portion of the great mystery of the Godhead. He believes in the doctrine of the Father. The wicked, the impenitent man can not say this, with truth; no unregenerate man can. Even a bad man may adore the God of nature, may feel that he is a Great Being and a Powerful Being—yes, a terrible Being. He may believe in him as the All-wise Creator, and love ingeniously to trace out the wonders of his works, he may conceive of him as Almighty, the Self-existing Jehovah, as the Ruler and Governor of men; or even as their final Judge;—but as the Father?—No.

Hence, St. John declares, no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and He to whom the Son shall reveal Him. "No man," says Christ, "cometh to the Father but by me." "I am the way, the truth, and the Life."

What is it then rightly to receive the doctrine of the Son? Can it mean less than to believe that as ordinarily

the Son partakes of the intrinsic and equal nature of the Father, even so within the man Christ Jesus there came down and tabernacled a full and complete indwelling of the Divine Nature?—that he who was thus the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person, became at once the Revealer of the Father and the Rescuer of men? To believe in the Son then embraces a reliance on the divine authority of all He said and did on earth for man's redemption; the Son executing and acting out here those things of which the pattern existed in the eternal counsels of the Divine mind; doing nothing of Himself but what He thus saw in the bosom of the Father. The plan all prepared in Heaven—its working out committed to the Son on earth; even as He says, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work"—"I and my Father are one." To receive Christ, therefore, is (and herein lies the great practical efficiency of the doctrine), to receive all His work, all He said, all He did and suffered as the authorized exposition and carrying out of the divine counsels in our behalf, and a reflection of the disposition of the full Deity toward each weary and heavy-laden sinner.

When the Ethiopian eunuch sat in his chariot, and his faith was demanded by Philip, he replied at once, "I believe that Jesus is the Son of God." It was the most comprehensive confession possible of all this—the essence of the whole Christian faith.

When a man has thus, with all his soul, received Christ as the Son, when he can lay his hand upon his heart, and say, "Now I believe in the Son of God—I receive Him as my Master, I acknowledge allegiance and obedience to Him as my Head and King; I hope for forgiveness and peace through Him as my Mediator and Priest; I receive Him as

my *guide* through life, His precepts to be my rule, His doctrines and revelations my faith—Himself as the great elder brother in whom the whole family are named, the *Head* of His body the Church;"—that man hath both the Father and the Son.

But "no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost." What is it, then, that a man professes to believe in being baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost? Certainly not less than that a Divine Spiritual Power operates consciously and directly upon his soul; and which he recognizes as distinct from all other impressions produced by the Father and the Son; a power which enlightens and elevates him, makes dark things light and difficult duties easy, instructs and keeps him in the way of holiness, gives him energy in feebleness, and comfort in sorrow; causes him to know what he could not know without, to love what he hated, and to hate what he loved: a power which thus changes his nature, restoring the soul, in its ultimate and perfect sway, to its original image of God.

When a man can lay his hand upon his heart and say, I thus believe in the Holy Ghost: God's holy Spirit works with my spirit, teaches me to pray, causes me to love holiness and hate iniquity, with supreme affection has taught me to embrace Christ, and to love the Father; when a man has an experimental faith thus in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost; feels that these three are but One —one whole—one "name"—one in his own heart and experience: then, and not till then, has he the elements of that Christian faith professed in being baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Who can estimate the importance of such teachings at such a time, both to enlarge Christian charity to the com-

prehension of all who credibly avow their experience of these fundamental truths; and as a conservative element, at the same time, to restrict the profession of Christianity to such. All the controversies now agitating Christendom will give each year an increased prominence to the baptismal confession thus regarded. Christian baptism is more than instruction, therefore, it is a personal *profession* of many vital truths.

Several years ago, there was an extensive revival of religion in an inland town of New England, where the Universalists were numerous and influential. Some who had belonged to that Society joined the Baptist Church, and many more, firm supporters of the system, were much shaken. At length their minister, who had heretofore for twelve years ever ridiculed the ordinances of religion in his sermons, altered his style of preaching, told his people that he was convinced of the propriety of Christian baptism, and of the importance of forming a *Universalist Church*, inviting those of his congregation who desired, to unite with him in doing so.

A few agreed to join, some desired sprinkling, some pouring, and some immersion; and of those who chose the latter some preferred kneeling in the water, some at the water's edge. Another Universalist preacher came over from a neighboring town, first immersed the minister who resided there, after which they together administered what each desired, to the rest, and then formed them all into a professed Church.

On the next Sabbath it was noticed that one of the principal Universalists of the town, and his wife, attended with the Baptists, and again on the following Sabbath. It was the first time for years that they had been seen in an evan-

gelical place of worship, and all were convinced that there must be some change in their views. The man had, years before, fitted up the whole of the second story of his house into one large ball-room, where nearly all the balls and public gatherings used to be held. It was the rendezvous of the opponents of evangelical religion, and he had ever been particularly bitter. Nor was it without some misgivings that the Baptist minister, having resolved to visit him, fastened his horse at his gate.

He at once gave this account of himself: "About two or three weeks ago I attended the baptism of Mr. ——, (the Universalist minister). I had heard him formerly ridicule that which he now quoted the New Testament to prove true. This led me to observe it more carefully, and I became convinced that if baptism was right, universalism was all wrong, and if universalism was right, baptism was all wrong."

"What led you to that opinion?"

"Baptism," he replied, "seems intended to divide all men into two classes, the religious and the worldly. It draws a line between them. Universalism makes no such difference. It breaks down all the distinction."

The minister asked which he intended to give up.

He replied that he and his wife had been led by what they had witnessed, prayerfully to read the Bible; that they had found singular light and strength through prayer, and had enjoyed the worship in which they had united, but wished to see more clearly before they decided.

In the course of a few weeks they both professed an entire change, and in proper time applied for Christian baptism, desiring to consecrate the *ball-room*, and open it for the worship of their Master, whenever there should be an opportunity.

It was therefore arranged that on the following Sabbath evening, this room should be used for Divine service, previous to the baptism.

Within full view of the house rolled a clear and beautiful stream, which suited well for the ordinance. Seldom has baptism seemed so powerfully to preach the whole doctrines of evangelical religion, and show its own practical importance by the nature of the profession which it makes. A large multitude was there of those who a short time before had witnessed the same outward form used by a Universalist. But "without controversy" it professed and preached all the points of an evangelical faith and personal experience as no words of man could express them. It seemed devised to cut at the roots of the system of popular modern Universalism, by its simple professions, as no mere argument could. It appeared as if made to utter just all of those truths that a Universalist might desire to proclaim in renouncing that system.

It professed a "fleeing from *the wrath to come*," by personal repentance.[1] Redemption through the death and resurrection of Christ;[2] his own regeneration or death to sin, and newness of heart and life,[3] and his faith in future retributions and hope of being finally raised from the dead to live with Him in glory.[4] It is not as a matter of controversy, not as a sectional distinction, that Baptists love this ordinance, but as the most clear profession, the most eloquent preacher of those great truths which all real Christians desire to bind around their hearts, and unfold to the world as a banner, in their acts and lives.

[1] Matthew, iii. 7, 8.
[2] Colossians, ii. 12.
[3] Romans, vi. 4–6.
[4] 1 Corinthians, xv. 29.

§ III. The Pledges of Baptism.

Baptism is not merely retrospective, but also prospective; not only a profession of the past, but a promise and a pledge of things yet future, and hence its important bearing on the Christian to the very end of life. It binds him by solemn obligations, and sustains his faith by formal pledges. It is not necessary here to repeat what has been said on a former page, as to the increasing sense which is every where manifesting itself of the value of the formal part of religion. Puseyism and Romanism prove this. The only question is, whether we shall have a series of forms and symbols teaching error or teaching truth; those established by the Saviour of men, or those which sprung up out of the corruptions of after ages.

The idea of many evangelical Christians, that because good men differ about forms, therefore it is better to treat them all with indifference, makes as little account of human nature and experience, as it does of the Bible.

On the part of the candidate, baptism is a promise to live a life of separation from the world, and consecration to Christ; and in this its importance is felt. At the close of a passage before quoted, from the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul speaking of the baptismal vow, says, "Let not sin, therefore reign in your mortal bodies that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof, neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those who are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Thus the baptized are pledged to separation from a life of sin, dedicating themselves to a course of holiness. Baptism is in this respect the most solemn thing on the face of the

earth. The believer in Christ here surrenders the world, and professes himself alive unto God. He here renounces, yea, as it were, buries in a liquid grave, the pomps and vanities of the world—its pride, its ambition, its selfishness, its supreme and ruling attachment to the riches, and honors, and pleasures of this life. He promises to be a follower of the meek and humble Jesus, to obey his laws, to imitate his example, to be guided by his Spirit, to live, in fact, a life of holy love, courage and confession. Baptism is here placed at the threshold of the Christian course, as a pledge that the candidate will be ready to follow it up by a life spent in the confession of Christ in whatever way he requires. This duty, deriving its obligation from the will of the Saviour alone, being a positive, as distinct from a moral command, is well fitted to show that in all our ways, even of avowing Christ, we must be regulated by his will. The moment that any lose sight of this, they are much distressed to know just when and how to confess Christ, and when and where to stop. On the one hand, there is to be avoided the ostentatious spirit of a Jehu, who through policy and vain glory cried out "Come see my zeal for the Lord of Hosts," or the unbidden impetuosity of Peter, when he smote off the ear of Malchus. But the cowardly spirit of approaching Jesus but only in private; and as the "Teacher come from God," yet like Nicodemus only venturing by night, for fear of the cross, this is also to be dreaded on the other hand.

The child of grace here learns at the entrance of his course, that nothing is more necessary than to be ready cheerfully, openly, and daily, to avow his religious principles. And he also pledges himself to confess Christ through life, in the Saviour's own way; to go so far as he has some

plain directions, and no further; never to go back where there is a command to go forward, and never to go forward where he is not bidden. Such a principle heartily embraced and acted upon, at the outset, will save the Christian many sorrows and difficulties, conferring the elements of a manly and consistent piety.

But *the pledge is reciprocal.* While the believer surrenders himself to Christ in the waters of baptism, Christ in that ordinance pledges himself to the believer, yea to carry him through, who faithfully and earnestly engages in the Christian life, relying on his grace. Here he enters, as it were, into a public covenant with his Maker and Redeemer. He takes God for his portion, who by authorizing him to do this, here pledges himself that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come shall separate him from His love. He who has known what it is truly to thirst after righteousness, will find here the voice of God saying to him, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters * * * and I will *make an everlasting covenant with you*, even the sure mercies of David." And when in after days his soul is cast down, and his heart is disquieted within him, he can remember and recur to the covenant thus publicly ratified by divine authority in the waters of his baptism, and his spirit will be refreshed while he says, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks so panteth my soul after Thee, oh God."[1]

Indeed the final pledge given to the Christian in his bap

[1] The whole of this beautiful Psalm (42d) was sung, during some centuries, by the Christians, as they walked in procession to the baptistries, when a candidate was about to be baptized. So also were parts of Isaiah, lv.

tism is that Jesus will raise him up at the last great day by the same spirit which raised up Christ from the dead, dwelling in him. Rom. viii. 11. It thus becomes the pledge to him of a resurrection to eternal life.

There is a passage of Scripture not without its difficulties of interpretation indeed, but which yet clearly shows that there is inspired authority for regarding the baptism of a believer a pledge of his glorious resurrection. It is in 1 Cor. xv. 29, where St. Paul, arguing on this subject suddenly asks, "Why are we then baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not, and why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" The Apostle may perhaps be regarded as referring to the case of those who presented themselves for baptism after the funerals of the martyrs, like fresh soldiers pressing forward in the assault in the room of those fallen on the field of battle. Such persons might be said to be baptized for, or in the room of the dead. And St. Paul might reasonably ask, why then are these thus baptized for the dead? Why, when one rank of Christian soldiers is swept away by the sword of persecution, does another step forward and take its place, except that in baptism they have symbolized their faith in the resurrection, their hopes of thereby arriving at a better state of existence? And why stand the rest in jeopardy of the same fate every hour? But whatever precise interpretation we may give these words, it is clear that in baptism the Christian professes his faith in the resurrection even on the principle upon which the Apostle argues, "if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

The fathers, therefore, received baptism as a pledge and symbol of the resurrection in its very mode. Chrysostom says, "our being baptized, even immersed in water, and our

rising again out of it, is a symbol of our descending into the grave, and our returning thence. Wherefore St. Paul calls baptism a burial. For he says we are buried with Christ by baptism unto death."[1]

This Christian rite, then, is a pledge of the bright future life from him who liveth and was dead, and is alive forever more, and who has the keys of hell and death, who openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth. It is a message direct from the Lamb that sitteth in the midst of the throne. "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." He says to each weak and trembling believer, "Struggle on but a little while, be humble in the midst of a proud world, be self-denying in the midst of the gay and luxurious, be prayerful amid the worldly, love when hated, bless when persecuted, be faithful for a little time, and as sure as thou art what thou here professest, I will come again and receive thee unto myself, that where I am thou mayest be also." Thus the Christian's baptism becomes to him a symbol, yet not a mere symbol, but a *pledge* from the Head of the Church, let down to him, as it were, by a golden thread from heaven; a pledge and a foretaste of joys to come; "an earnest of his inheritance."

And is it now asked by any, why is it important to preserve true and original baptism? The reply is, because each and all of these principles which it teaches, professes and pledges, are important; it assures the candidate that all these things are not, as many would suppose, interpolations into the Christian system; they are realities, all engrafted by Christ himself into the initiatory ordinance of his discipleship.

[1] Chrys. Hom. 40, on 1 Cor.

In this view we may and ought to prize Christian baptism very highly. Not as an act of merit; not as a matter of controversy and of dispute. A holy mind will shrink from doing or saying any thing unnecessarily to wound the feelings of a sincere Christian, who may be weak and in ignorance of his duty. But as a solemn act of spiritual worship to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; as a most solemn part of authorized self-consecration; as the most eloquent preacher of all the chief doctrines of Christianity, we are obliged to love and prize this ordinance most highly. It is a grand conservator of those holy truths. It is the ark of the covenant, in which is deposited the autograph, not of the law, but of the Gospel.

§ IV. Baptism Important for its Effects.

The object of the present section is further to illustrate the importance of Christian baptism, from its effects on the world, as the commencement of a life of *open and avowed piety*. Every young Christian in turn probably asks this question, Why can not I as well be a follower of Christ without making a public profession of religion? As it is not possible for him to understand all the reasons at the outset of his religious life, God has not left the matter optional, but seen fit to rest it upon his own positive institution, and attached to it a degree of importance which, in the present day, it is too much the custom to disparage.

The history of an avowed piety is one that begins very early in that of our race, and long before the flood. No sooner was the family of Seth, the son of Adam, established in the earth, than we read, according to our present version,

that "then began men to call upon the name of the Lord."[1] This can not mean that now, for the first time, men began to pray to God. Adam and Eve worshiped Him both before and after the expulsion from Eden. Cain and Abel both sacrificed to Him; and Seth was probably a pious man. Without examining other conjectures, the marginal reading appears to give the probable sense of the passage, "*Then began men to call themselves by the name of the Lord.*" That is to say, in the time of Enos, the grandson of Adam, the descendants of Cain had probably become so wicked that it was necessary to make a broad line of demarkation between those who served Jehovah and those who served him not. At this period pious men first began to separate themselves openly from the wicked, and to avow a distinctive religion. In the same spirit, Moses, at a later period, says to the children of Israel, "Thou hast avouched this day the Lord to be thy God."[2] And thus Isaiah prophecies, "One shall say I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel."[3]

God has always had a seed to serve him. Long before the event recorded in Genesis, there were men of personal and practical holiness, but not of the same conspicuous and avowed piety as henceforth. The wickedness of the wicked made their religion stand forth more conspicuously, and made them feel the necessity of a more bold, active, agressive piety than heretofore, hence they "called themselves by the name of the Lord." Accordingly, in Genesis, vi. 3, we find them known as "the sons of God."

Here, then, commenced the distinction between the Church

[1] Genesis, iv. 26. [2] Deuteronomy, xxvi. 17. [3] Isaiah, xliv. 5.

and the world; and just in proportion as it has been kept up, religion has ever prospered, while by so much as it has been relaxed, religion has degenerated and lost its power over the hearts and consciences of mankind.

We are not now, however, going to discuss the state of the world and of the Church as they were five thousand years ago. We have to speak of them as they are *now*, to show the importance of *open piety*—the necessity of avowing our religion so far as it goes, and of calling ourselves by the name of the Lord. It is probable that every emotion of the mind has its natural and appropriate expression in some corresponding motion of the body. And our actions are becoming, in proportion as they are the natural or divinely-appointed expressions of some proper emotion of the mind. If the Spirit truly worketh within us, it is to will and *to do* the good pleasure of our Heavenly Father.

There are certain natural exhibitions of piety, to repress which is highly injurious to the religious character. When Daniel knew that the writing was signed, consigning to the den of lions whosoever worshiped God for thirty days, he prayed *as aforetime*, with his window open, three times daily. To have opened that window, if he had been accustomed to have it shut, would have been ostentation, but to have closed it for fear of the king's decree, or of the lion's den, would have been denying his God. His consistency, perhaps his salvation, turned upon leaving that window open at that time.

"Ye are the light of the world," said the Saviour; "a city that is set on a hill can not be hid." It is in the nature of light to shine, and to throw its bright and glittering rays far and wide over creation, and it is a law of God that we may not fetter this diffusive tendency, may not light a

candle to put it under a bushel. If we make the attempt, the light will soon exhaust the air within, and thus extinguish itself. If Christ has kindled a flame of grace in our hearts, however feeble, all artificial efforts to conceal it are wrong. That light might otherwise shine over the dark waters of the sea of life, and perchance keep others from the rocks and breakers which are on every side of a religious course. All unnatural effort to repress the flame of piety is a wrong done to the Church and to the world.

Christians are like light-houses along a rock-bound coast. What should we think of the keeper of one of these beacons, who was too modest to make his habitation known by kindling up his lantern on some stormy night? He might not hear the gurgling sound of the vessels as they sank like lead in the mighty waters. They might not strike against his light-house. He might not perceive the shriek and last, loud wail of mortal agony, as men were in their death struggle. But would he be the less answerable for not having let his light shine? Or if it were a revolving light, off the mouth of some harbor, where the bright home of many a storm-tossed mariner awaited him, and the keeper only neglected to wind the machinery, so that it blazed not up at the appointed moment, who can tell the perils into which thousands, sailing by those lights, would be thrown in a single night?

Christians are the keepers of these light-houses. They are the light of the world. No man can tell the effect of a single suppression of the soul's great message to mankind. Not until the thrones are set, and the dead, small and great, stand before God; not until "the sea shall give up the dead that are in it," shall all the consequences of suppressing light be manifest.

That sea! it is navigated by millions, crossed by all in the great voyage of human life, ships are foundering on it in every gale, and shoals and breakers are all around. But yonder lies the harbor, and there stands the light-house—the Church of the living God, round which the hopes of a thousand spiritual mariners are clinging, and to which each eye is directed. Suddenly the light gets out of order—it revolves no longer; its rays are dim when they should be clear and bright. The mariner stands in doubt, and fears to venture; the light is not such as is laid down in his chart; he deems it safer to ride out the tempest at sea. Or, while he hesitates, the light goes out, and he has missed its bearings; he strikes a rock. Is there no responsibility here? But the keeper is only asleep perhaps, when he should have been awake, he only does not let his light shine.

One of the earliest and most universally extended temptations of the young Christian, is to suppress the natural and appropriate expression of the religious emotions. But what does it really amount to? Just this: smothering the cries of an infant, by which it makes known its existence, and its want of care and nutrition. Many young Christians, from a fear of forwardness, and self-deception, and future inconsistency, stifle every natural and spontaneous exhibition of their religious wants and emotions, the anxieties and experiences of their souls, in the great struggle after the unseen mysteries of spiritual life; until by stifling the expression, they lose the ability to express, and soon the disposition to act, and the power to feel. It is as if one should put an extinguisher on a lamp, lest the wind should blow it out.

Such persons will point to the many who have professed and boasted;—who, like the foolish virgins, have gone forth

with the lamp of a profession, but without the oil and fire of grace. They refer to these failures, and ask how they shall venture to erect their light, even on the Rock of ages, when so many have failed.

There stands upon the coast of England, near Plymouth Harbor, the celebrated Eddystone Light-house. About one hundred and twenty years ago, an engineer of distinguished ability, erected a fabric there, riveted so firmly to the rocks by iron cleets, that he was heard boastingly to say, that he only wished he might be in it when the fiercest storm that ever raged under heaven was blowing. After many years, he was on a visit to the building in 1745, during one of the severest gales on record. And in a dark night, while many a sailor was tossing upon the sea, the light was observed to be extinguished; and when the storm cleared up, light-house, keeper, architect, all were found to have been swept away, not a vestige was left, the very iron having been torn from its riveted foundations in the rock.

The present light-house, which has stood ever since, was then erected on the same spot; over the entrance to which, the new architect modestly and piously inscribed these words: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it." And there it stands to this day.

Christian baptism, nailing up this talismanic sentence over the door of each heart, while it boldly erects its light to the world, becomes divinely protected and preserved in doing so, amid all the storms and tempests of life.

Every one of us has some circle of influence. Our avowal of the Saviour is the most efficient way of inducing others to take refuge in Christ. Multitudes are constantly led to him through the experience of those around them,

and his fame and his glory is thus spread more in the earth than in any other way. Our avowal of gratitude may bring thousands of others ultimately to glorify Him to all eternity. What should we think of a poor man cured gratuitously of some desperate disease, who refused to acknowledge that he ever had been sick, or restored by the physician, saying that the cure of so bad a case could bring no renown to any one?

What might seem slight neglect in an individual case, multiplied by the thousands and tens of thousands of the spiritual Israel, mounts up in each age to a mighty robbery of the great King of Zion, defrauding him of vast revenues of glory.

Were all those who consider themselves truly pious, to bring their full and proper meed of praise, and honor, and glory to the Lamb, by a public and constant confession of Him before men, in every appointed way, it would make this earth resound with hallelujahs and ring with the praise of Immanuel. It would bring such a tribute of renown and thanksgiving as to produce the greatest awakening, both of saints and of sinners, the world has ever seen. And these cases would bring others and others in each successive generation. But what wonder if the great Head of the Church withhold his Spirit and his presence—what wonder if the world be so neglectful of religion, and the Church so cold, while Jesus is robbed and defrauded of his own glory, as He is daily in the house of those of all of us, in this age, who consider ourselves his friends?

CHAPTER III.

INFANT BAPTISM PROVED INJURIOUS BY THE CONCESSIONS OF ITS RECENT DEFENDERS.

Some years ago several students were being examined in Systematic Theology, in a Theological Seminary, in which, though itself Pedobaptist, young men of different denominations were educated, and in which there was much Christian liberality both of sentiment and expression.

"Who are the proper subjects for baptism?" was one of the questions asked.

A student replied, "Believers, and it has generally been the opinion of the Church, that their infants are entitled to the same privilege."

"And pray, sir, what is your own opinion on the subject?"

"I have not been able to satisfy myself that it was a Scriptural practice." He then explained that although he did not believe infant baptism to be a Biblical institution, yet he thought it a touching and beautiful rite, well calculated to lead parents to recognize their religious duties to their children, and dedicate them solemnly to God.

This is in substance the view now entertained in regard to this ordinance by a large number of the most enlightened Pedobaptist divines in this country—by the Organ of the Free Presbyterian Church in Scotland—by such men as Coleridge was in England, by Bunsen, Neander, and the great body of men of the highest claims to learning and

piety in Germany. This is, in fact, the ground-work of most modern defenses of the system, and as such, demands our present attention—itself indicating great progress, while rendering the ultimate abandonment of the system inevitable.

§ I. Coleridge's Defense of Infant Baptism.

We begin with one whose varied learning and profound reasoning powers have given his thoughts, fragmentary and almost contradictory as they often were, and generally obscurely expressed, so much weight with all deep thinkers on religious subjects.

Coleridge, as we have before seen, concedes freely that "there exists no sufficient proofs that the baptism of infants was the practice of the Apostolic age," and that he "honors the course of those who reject it, as most scriptural." Yet he argues in favor of infant baptism, on such grounds as the following:

"Where a ceremony answered and was intended to answer several purposes, which at its first institution were blended in respect of the time, but which afterward by change of circumstances were necessarily disunited, then either the Church hath no power or authority delegated to her, or she must be authorized to choose and determine to which of the several purposes the ceremony should be attached." And he asks boldly, "in what manner the Church could have exercised a sound discretion more wisely and effectively than it has done."[1]

Such a defense as this is surely more alarming and injurious than infant baptism itself. For so long as Scripture was quoted to maintain it, however erroneously, a tribute

[1] Aids to Reflection—Baptism.

of respect was at least paid to its supremacy, while here infant baptism is made to rest upon the "discretionary authority" of the Church.

The whole plausibility of this argument lies in taking for granted a "change of circumstances" which has no existence. But the real point is not whether the Church has made a wise or unwise use of its authority, but whether it possesses any power at all to make such an alteration. This is the true question at issue. The visible churches of Christ are simply executive bodies, not legislative. Their duty is to carry out the laws of Christ, not to make laws of their own; to exhibit in living operation that system of religion which Jesus Christ and His inspired Apostles left us, but not to alter or amend it at pleasure. If any set of men in the name of a Church, undertake to improve upon Christianity, to repeal its most fundamental laws, and alter the whole nature of its membership; they may make an agglomeration of the superstitious philosophies and opinions of all subsequent ages, upon a small basis, perhaps of Christianity as a germ. This concedes in full the principle of all that the Church of Rome has ever asserted. It is certain that at the Reformation, none of the Churches that then arose could have stood a moment, had they admitted this openly. The right here claimed is not only a legislative but a fundamental—a *constitutional* power, an authority to overthrow the original construction of Christ's visible church, and to create an institution fundamentally different. For if baptism is the door of visible Church membership, the admission of all infants for life to a society originally composed only of penitent believers, is one of the most radical alterations conceivable. The whole terms of membership are changed. It is a *coup d'état* of the most sweeping kind,

flooding and altering the whole course of operative power. Part of the effects may be obviated where these persons are arbitrarily excluded until they are converted as they sometimes virtually are, but the principle of deviation at will is established. But in the vast majority of cases, those thus admitted become its members and officers, often obtaining the complete control, as in all National Establishments.

Another question arises here. What is this body which it is urged has thus the right to change the terms of Church membership so radically? The word Church, *εκκλησία*, it is generally conceded, is used in the New Testament ecclesiastically in two senses, and but two.[1] 1. A particular visible Church or body of Christians in the habit of assembling together for worship, and walking in the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel.[2] 2. The Church universal, consisting of all those whose names are written in heaven.[3]

Now if the authority to make this alteration were lodged any where, it would be in the universal Church, according to Mr. Coleridge. But then this Church consists not always of those who profess religion, but of all those who possess it, whether they are baptized or not. The dying thief was a member of no visible Church, but was not he a member of Christ's mystical body, seeing that our Saviour said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise?" All true Christians are members of this body, the saints in heaven as well as those on earth. Christ its Head is in heaven, and its members will all assemble at the Marriage-supper of the Lamb, but never till then. The idea of one only true, visible, universal Church on earth, is a fiction early invented

[1] See Robinson's Lexicon, *εκκλησία*, (b.)

[2] Gal. i. 2, Rev. i. 20, iii. 22.

[3] Heb. xii. 23, Eph. i. 22, iii. 10.

to crush out supposed heretics, and naturally and necessarily resolving itself into Popery.

Besides, if "the Church" possess this fundamental power to alter its own constitution, where is the proof that it has ever so exercised it. If the masses of Christians ever consented to the change, it was not with their eyes open, publicly and fairly. It was through false pretenses of *Scriptural* authority, through the force and usurpation of spiritual rulers; a fraud violating the whole procedure. For it was, before it became common, falsely professed to have been derived from apostolic tradition, or from the authority of circumcision, and above all from the necessity of its regenerating efficacy to procure salvation. Even now it could not stand with evangelical Christians, except upon a supposition, by the masses, of its *Scriptural* authority. We should soon find, universally, that if the Church had power to alter it one way, they had power and discretion too to alter it back again.

But, in fact, this whole appeal to "the Church" is as if the President of a Bank should, at the annual meeting of its shareholders, decide that every bill-holder had a right to vote, and then take advantage of a resolution passed by the body composed of both these classes to prove that his decision was correct. The natural result of such an extension of the controlling power to a large number of those who had little real interest in its management, would be the practical reversion of it back into the more entire charge of the officers. This was, too, the immediate effect of infant baptism.

But let us suppose further that such a meeting should empower the directors, president and cashier to make any other alteration they saw best, and henceforth fill all vacan-

cies, and be self-perpetuating with the whole legal powers of the bank. Would that render the transaction valid? And if, while acting under these *quasi* powers, the property were squandered by folly or by fraud, would not the real shareholders have a right to step in, resume the election of their own officers, and proclaim all measures carried through the admission of improper persons to the corporate powers of the body, liable to be invalidated? This is precisely the manner in which the name of "the Church" has been misused, and its authority prostituted. Under the plea of exercising "a sound discretion wisely and effectually," the whole terms of Church membership have been radically altered through infant baptism, and then the appeal is made to the body thus altered, to prove both its own authority and its consent. First by a baptism, without any profession of faith, vast herds of the unregenerate are for centuries accounted members of the Church. Unfit to manage these concerns themselves, all the power naturally falls into the hands of the clergy, whether with or without the consent of the masses matters little. The whole affair is radically opposed in principle to the nature of the Church established by Christ and his Apostles.

So palpably is what is commonly called "the Church" but a fiction, in all, excepting the earlier centuries of ecclesiastical history, that it means really not the people, but the priests; not the body, but the officers; until the whole system culminates naturally in a center—the Pope.

But if it be said that each of the true visible *Churches* of Christ have this power of altering their own constitutions at any time, which is the only possible Protestant ground, then each being independent, can not, by its action, bind any other. It would amount to this, therefore, that

every particular Church is a perfectly voluntary society, *without even the most fundamental principle of membership or organization laid down in the New Testament unalterably*, having not a single necessary feature of permanent identity. The New Testament represents each one of those Churches scattered over the face of the whole globe, as being built up of "lively stones a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God." We find in the book of Revelations, Christ representing himself as walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and declaring that the candlesticks represent his Churches. On these and other representations of Scripture we have all been taught that they are *divine institutions* to which Christ has promised his presence to the end of time.

But if now these bodies claim a right to alter this constitution, and instead of a spiritual house built of lively stones, whole nations may be swept into them without personal piety, the next question is, does this promise of the presence of Jesus Christ extend to all such institutions? Their constitutions may be made or altered by some libertine monarch, like Henry VIII., or by delegates who agree upon a certain platform, and amend and alter it at their pleasure. They may all of them call themselves Churches, they may have a succession of ministers if they see fit, but the question now is much more fundamental, have they adhered sufficiently to the original constitution to be considered as Christian Churches at all? Jesus Christ will not extend his presence and recognition to every thing that calls itself by that name, and allow an unlimited "discretionary power" as to its most fundamental provisions. The best that can be looked for is that He will perhaps also exercise a discretionary power; while it is cer-

tain that the whole procedure must be regarded as utterly unauthorized.

If now we take up a work by a distinguished clergyman of the Church of England (the author of "The Seven Lamps of Architecture"), we shall find him writing as follows, about the constitution of his own ecclesiastical body: "It has been ingeniously endeavored to make baptism a sign of admission into the visible Church, but absurdly enough, for we know that half the baptized people in the world are very visible rogues, believing neither in God nor devil, and *it is flat blasphemy* to call them visible Christians." And yet if we ask Mr. Coleridge by what right infant baptism has been introduced to effect this radical alteration in the constitution of his Church, in reply, he says, "I ask with confidence in what way could the Church have exercised a sound discretion more wisely, piously, and effectively."[1]

We may perhaps be told that all this is the result, not of infant baptism, but of Church and State, and if we turn to the Episcopalians in this country, we shall unquestionably find a great improvement. But still, in "The New York Churchman" will be found an article written a short time ago, entitled, "Rights of the Laity." Speaking of these, the author says:

"What are their rights? I take this diocese as an example. Connection of the loosest kind gives a layman, no matter what may be his opinions, and I am sorry to say hardly any matter what may be his moral and religious character, a right to vote for wardens and vestrymen, and a right to be a warden or vestryman. Every such person is eligible to membership of the Diocesan or General Convention, to a seat in the Diocesan, standing committee, and

[1] On Baptism, Aids to Reflection.

every appointment in the gift of either Convention. These rights are secured by constitutions and canons, which can not be altered without the consent of the laity." Such are some of the results of "this sound discretion, wisely, piously, and effectually exercised."

On the other hand, the essential principle of Church constitution with the Baptists, is the admission only of persons baptized, upon a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ, in the habit of assembling for worship and ordinances. This is, we have seen, identically that of the primitive churches—the bodies to which Christ promised his presence and blessing to the end of time. And when Coleridge, himself, "inclines to this view as the more Scriptural,[1] and Neander and Augusti are certain of it, can it be said that infant baptism is not injurious as well as erroneous?

But the question is not merely whether any Church has, or has not exercised her discretionary power wisely and piously. It is something far more grave, even whether she has any discretionary power at all like that claimed, to make and unmake constitutions, and whether the usurpation of such a power is not injurious?

This is one of the most important of all questions, because, in fact, it bears most directly upon the Divine authority of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, to institute a form of organization beyond the control and authority of after ages; *to institute a permanent visible body of Christians.* Pedobaptism thus maintained, says in effect, that Christians now are just as wise, and have as much power to alter things, as Christ had to establish them. And this, while it may seem at first view to be merely an exaggerated claim of Christ's presence, or an undue exaltation of the Church authority,

[1] Works, vol. v. p. 542. Notes on Robinson.

which were bad enough, is yet so much worse as this, that it is in fact a lowering down of the Divine authority, of the work of Christ and his Apostles. It is a denial of the permanent character of all Divine institutions. It says in effect, and Bunsen almost says it in words, "true we are poor fallible creatures, nevertheless, by the lights of experience and Church history, we are able in this age of reconstruction to fashion a constitution not merely for the *ideal* Church of the future, but for the *actual* Church of the present, that shall be an improvement upon the original." Covered up in words that deceive even those who use them, this is the real point which is now ultimately involved in the theory of these modern advocates of infant baptism, on the ground of a discretionary power. All who attentively consider Coleridge's ideas, and those which have been in Germany at the root of this whole argument, will perceive that these are not merely theoretic inferences, but most practical and vital facts. The tendency of the whole is beyond what its authors perceive, to diminish the supreme authority and Divine perfection of original Christianity, so far as the formation of a church is concerned, and by a theory of development, cautiously let down this religion to rest upon a foundation of naturalism in place of super-naturalism.

True, the entering wedge is here inserted by the feather end. It is supposed that baptism was "originally intended to answer several purposes, which purposes at its first institution were blended in respect of time, but which afterward by change of circumstance, were necessarily disunited, as when for instance a large and ever-increasing proportion of the Christian Church, or those who at least bore the Christian name, were of Christian parents."

Was baptism then designed to answer several purposes at

first blended in point of time, but afterward disunited? The supposition is happily baseless. If true, it would reflect upon the prescience of the founder of Christianity. There were surely just as large a proportion of children belonging to the first Christians as there are belonging to Christians now. There is no change of circumstance in that particular. True, they were not then considered fit to become members of the visible Church, or in this sense to "bear the Christian name." Yet that being the *effect* of the introduction of infant baptism could not be the *cause* of it. But those baptized seem to have been even chiefly heads of families, and therefore as large, if not a larger proportion of children were then connected with Christianity by family ties, than later. Nor did it originally matter, so far as Church membership was concerned, whose children they were, for until they became truly pious, they were never baptized. All, whether descended from Christian parents or heathen, were then baptized in the same way, and on the same principles. There was, and could be no change affecting the object of this ordinance.

But Coleridge proceeds: "One purpose of baptism was the making it publicly manifest, first, what individuals were to be regarded by the world as belonging to the visible communion of Christians. Secondly, to point out for the Church itself those that were entitled to that especial dearness, that watchful disciplinary love and loving-kindness, which, over and above the duties of philanthropy and universal charity, Christ himself has enjoined in the *new* commandment."

If we should admit all this, what has it to do with the question? If the children of believers were to be baptized as entitled to this "especial dearness" and disciplinary love

of the Church, at the end of two hundred years; they ought to have been so received at first. Nothing is more injurious to Christianity than by baptism publicly to declare to the world, that a child belongs to the visible communion of Christians, because his father is a pious man, if he turn out a reprobate. And so also, while the children of Christians are entitled to that especial dearness and watchful disciplinary love which belong to them as *children* of pious parents, yet they are not entitled to be loved even by their parents as *Christians*, until they are such, and manifest the sensible experiences of the new life. And so in regard to the relations they sustain to all other beings, whether equals, instructors, or pastors. There is in all this, no change of circumstances at all affecting the ordinance, even if the parental relation had not existed in the days of the Apostles, as it does now. The history of Christ blessing the infants is so recorded as to leave no room for the supposition that they were baptized. There must have been vast multitudes of the children of believing parents[1] in the first ages. The neglect to baptize them then, and the institution of such terms as they could not possibly comply with, was a clear decision against their admissibility, until they became Christians by choice. So that infant baptism is even in direct opposition to the authority of our Saviour.

A further reason advanced is the most remarkable of all. Coleridge would have us combine with the above, "the necessity of checking the superstitious abuse of the baptismal rite;" that is, "the importance of preventing the ceremony from being regarded as other and more than a mere ceremony." Who does not know, that as infant baptism was never current until it was supposed to be necessary to sal-

[1] 1 Cor. vii. 14.

vation, so it became the great evidence, witness, and proof, to after ages, of this the most gigantic error of corrupt religion? It is difficult to conceive how Coleridge could have been quite sincere in penning a sentiment such as this, for in his "Notes on Jeremy Taylor," he says:

"Now this is the strongest argument of all against infant baptism, and that which alone weighed at one time with me; namely, that it supposes and most *certainly encourages a belief concerning a God the most blasphemous and intolerable*," even that the want of it may occasion their "eternal loss."[1] Neander not only sustains this, but says, alluding to the time when infant baptism began to be advocated, that "now * * * the error became more firmly established, that without external baptism no one could be delivered from inherent guilt, or raised to eternal life, and when the *notion of a magical influence or charm* connected with the sacraments, continually gained ground, the theory was finally evolved, of the unconditional necessity of infant baptism." Certainly nothing so favored the idea of "a magical influence or charm" connected with the sacraments; nothing so naturally and inevitably caused this notion to gain ground, as that very administration of baptism to infants, which Coleridge declares was piously and wisely introduced from its obvious tendency to have the opposite effect! He does indeed admit that, by an "unforeseen accident," wormwood was "afterward cast into the sweet waters of this fountain, and made them like the waters of Marah, too bitter to be drank." But he does not admit half their native bitterness, as it ought to be admitted, and they certainly have been pretty extensively drank, however bitter, until within the last hundred years.

[1] Works, vol. v. p. 192. Harper.

§ II. Dr. Bushnell's Views of Infant Baptism.

In the year 1847, the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society published two "Discourses on Christian Nurture," by Dr. Bushnell. They contained what was considered quite an original line of argument in favor of infant baptism, and were read first of all before the Hartford Association which body requested the author to publish them. After this, they were submitted to the Executive Committee of the above Society, read by every member, and re-read until the paper was considerably worn; corrected verbally by the author, at their request, and, approved, sanctioned, and endorsed by them, were finally published by the Society.

A Baptist newspaper in Boston first called attention to the remarkable character of this little work, as a defense of infant baptism at the expense of evangelical principles. Dr. Tyler, the senior Professor of a neighboring Congregational Theological Seminary, after a time, wrote a review of it, declaring it full of "dangerous tendencies;" and at last the Society itself, without retracting any thing, resolved "to suspend the sale of it, without publicity." This induced Dr. Bushnell to publish "An Argument in favor of the Discourses," etc., which finally he republished with the discourses themselves.

Dr. Bushnell's want of controversial tact has no doubt much hindered the spread of his theory, for in vindicating himself from the charge of heresy, he assumes positions and produces arguments even more offensive to his opponents than the point he wishes to prove. His system, too, has carried him far, very far; for the deeply logical structure of his mind, and the frankness of his character, have led him to avoid all shirking of legitimate consequences. But

this is, in its essence, the mildest and most moderate theory of infant baptism ever exhibited; the least offensive to others, the most simple, and consistent with itself. If it will not stand, nothing will. Dr. Tyler's letter in reply to it, is but an argument for Baptist principles from beginning to end.

Dr. Bushnell, indeed, has, beyond any other writer on this subject, resolved infant baptism back into the principles on which it essentially rests. He has even attempted to do the same in regard to the views of their opponents, thus enabling us to contrast, with the greatest accuracy, Pedobaptist and Baptist theories of Church membership.

There are several valuable concessions brought out in these writings, most important as arising from discourses originally intended against the Baptists, and yet made the more freely, from the fact that, after the first publication, Dr. Bushnell's particular opponent was himself a Pedobaptist. Thus, for instance, it was admitted that "no settled opinion on the subject of infant baptism and of Christian nurture *has ever been attained to*. Between the standard Protestant writers themselves there has been no agreement. What is the covenant? What meaning and force has it? Here we have never agreed, and do not now. The Baptists have pushed us for an answer, we have given them many answers, *but never any single answer in which we could agree among ourselves.*"[1]

He even shows that Dr. Hopkins insisted on "the *essential absurdity* of infant baptism as commonly practiced,"[2] and says, "There is little reason to wonder that the Baptists should reject infant baptism when we hold it ourselves

[1] Views of Christian Nurture and Subjects Adjacent thereto, pp. 56–61.

[2] Page 71.

only as a dead tradition, separated from any rational meaning or use. And if we stand upon the footing of absolute individualism, it follows irresistibly, as any child may see, that they are right in requiring evidence of actual faith previous to baptism.[1] He admits that they have all been holding infant baptism as an empty tradition, a form, the soul of which is evaporated and lost, giving its rejectors the strongest argument possible against it. And he approvingly quotes Dr. Nevins as declaring, in despair and horror, that the evangelical Puritanism of New England "has *made us all Baptists in theory, which is the same as to say that we ought to be so in fact.*"[2] We have long believed all that is here stated; that the Congregational Churches of New England, by just so much as they differ from the old Unitarian Churches, and the Presbyterian Churches, since the time of Tennant, were so far "Baptist in theory;" and on this ground it is that Baptists have felt less interest than, perhaps, they otherwise would, and ought to have done, in seeing them become so "in fact." We have long seen that infant baptism was among them but an empty tradition, a form, the soul of which had evaporated; that with the principles of the Evangelical Congregationalists of New England, in regard to a regenerate church-membership, it follows irresistibly, as any child may see, that Baptists are right in requiring evidence of actual faith previous to baptism. In fact, though we would not have introduced the words ourselves in regard to an institution any Christian brethren hold sacred, yet as they have done this, we may quote them, and admit "the essential absurdity" of infant baptism, as commonly practiced, from the time of Dr. Hopkins down to Dr. Bushnell; and that the New England Pedobaptists

[1] Page 82. [2] Page 96.

have not been able, in the course of two hundred years, to attain to any scheme of infant baptism, or settled opinion of its ground and import, consistent with their own writers, or even consistent with themselves. All this, however, we did not expect to have seen confessed so readily in "An Argument" in favor of infant baptism.

Dr. Bushnell also makes a still more pregnant concession when he says truly enough, we doubt not, "At the time of my settlement in the ministry, the council came near rejecting me, because I could say nothing more positive concerning infant baptism."[1] Even now, though he quotes Scripture, he does not build much on that, and, indeed, treads so very gently and softly on it, as to remind his readers of a man walking on what he suspects to be rather rotten ice in the spring.

He brings forward the case of "household baptisms," but admits that the power of these proof texts "does not depend in the least on the fact that there were children in these households." He even thinks "the argument for infant baptism rather weakened than strengthened by the supposition that there were infants;" and finally, that "these passages * * * *certainly do not prove* infant baptism in just the way in which many have used them as proof texts."[2]

In fact, infant baptism with him does not rest directly on Scripture, but on "*a theory*" of Christian nurture; and he tells us how he obtained it. After relating that he came near being rejected for not believing in it, he adds: "After two or three years of reflection, I came upon the discovery that all my views of Christian nurture were radically defective, and even false. And now what before was dark, or even absurd, immediately became luminous and dignified."[3]

[1] Page 82. [2] Pages 29, 30. [3] Page 82.

These views we will examine in a moment, for upon this all turns with him. He tells the Congregationalists that some of them are simply indifferent, "not seeing what good it can do the child, and others have *positive theological* objections to it." But it is his "settled conviction (now) that no man ever objected to infant baptism who had not, at the bottom of his objections, the "false views" which create so great difficulty in sustaining infant baptism in our (in the Congregational) Churches."[1] In a word, he concedes that, unless the "Baptist theory" of Christian nurture, *i. e.*, the views of Jonathan Edwards, Whitefield, and the whole evangelical theory of the New England Puritans, have been wrong (for he admits them all to be essentially Baptist), and his theory of children growing up Christians right, infant baptism is an "essential absurdity."[2]

We desire, then, now to compare the Baptist and Pedobaptist theories of Church membership and Christian nurture, upon which the whole of Dr. Bushnell's argument rests; an argument which was, it is true, "without publicity," dropped by the Committee of the "Massachusetts Sabbath School Society" when the controversy waxed warm, but which has been publicly "*approved*" by them, and never repudiated. It must, at least, be supposed to contain the doctrine of infant baptism, as they would like, were it consistent, to hold it forth, and is the only ground on which Dr. Bushnell thinks it can be reasonably held at all.

The whole of this argument rests upon these two errors; 1. It makes a serious mistake as to what really is the Baptist theory of the operations of Divine grace. 2. Much of what it considers as belonging exclusively to the Pedobaptist theory, our own principles admit and embrace quite as

[1] Pages 38, 9. [2] Page 71.

cordially as this, rejecting it only where it deviates from the truth.

Dr. Bushnell thus describes the "Baptist," or (as he sometimes calls it), "Ictic theory," or that of "individualism," which he puts in contrast with his own, to set it off to a better advantage:

"It is a religion that begins explosively, raises high frames, carries little or no expansion, and after the day is spent, subsides into a torpor. * * * It makes nothing of the family, and the Church, and the organic powers God has constituted as vehicles of grace. It takes every man as if he had existed *alone*, presumes that he is unreconciled to God until he has undergone some sudden and explosive experience in adult years, or after the age of reason; demands that experience, and only when it is reached, allows the subject to be an heir of life. Then on the other side or that of the Spirit of God, the very act or *ictus* by which the change is wrought, is isolated, or individualized, so as to stand in no connection with any other of God's means or causes—an epiphany in which God leaps from the stars, or some place above, to do a work apart from all system, or connection with His other works. Religion is thus a kind of transcendental matter, which belongs on the outside of life, and has no part in the laws by which life is organized—a miraculous epidemic, a fire-ball shot from the moon, something holy because it is from God, but so extraordinary, so out of place that it can not suffer any vital connection with the ties, and causes, and forms, and habits, which constitute the frame of our history. Hence the desultory, hard, violent, and often extravagant or erratic character it manifests. Hence in part the dreary years of decay, and darkness, that interspace our months of excite-

ment and victory."[1] It is with regret that we see such a picture, such a caricature, drawn of the Baptist theory of conversion. It is true he puts us in respectable company, and paints the above, not as the description of Baptist views, except as a part of that Congregational puritanism advanced by Jonathan Edwards, "all Baptist in theory." We leave it for others to decide, if it fairly represents the belief of the Evangelical New England churches, either Baptist or Congregational, viewed on the scale of the last hundred years. It would be almost an unfair caricature, even of the extreme excitements of itinerant evangelists—excitements, not arising legitimately out of any theory—but the boisterous passions of unruly individuals, tolerated indeed for a time, by several churches, but soon over. Similar excesses have arisen in all ages and in all parts of the world, even in Catholic as well as Protestant countries. The Jansenists have exhibited them as well as the Methodists. They are a phase of reaction from the great disease of sin and all religious indifference, and will exhibit themselves with any theory while human nature is in its present disordered state.

The true Pedobaptist theory Dr. Bushnell thus states by way of contrast. It is,

"That the child is to grow up a Christian.—In other words, the aim, effort, and expectation should be, not as is commonly assumed, that the child is to grow up in sin, to be converted after he comes to a mature age, but that he is to open on the world, as one that is spiritually renewed, not remembering the time when he went through a technical experience, but seeming rather to have loved what is good, from his earliest years."[2]

[1] Pages 68, 9. [2] Page 6.

This theory he illustrates as follows:

"If we narrowly examine the relation of parent and child, we shall not fail to discover something like a law of organic connection, as regards character, subsisting between them. Such a connection as makes it easy to believe, and natural to expect, that the faith of the one will be propagated in the other. Perhaps I should rather say such a connection as induces the conviction that the character of one is actually included in that of the other, as a seed is formed in the capsule, and being there matured by a nutriment derived from the stem is gradually separated from it."[1] Page 18.

[1] Dr. Bushnell afterward explains his meaning as follows: "I take the actings of the parent in the child, both before and after birth, for as far as the child's will or individuality are concerned, they are included in the same category of passivity, and cover them both by the same term; calling them '*organic*.' Considering next this organic power as inhabited by Christ, and the Spirit of God, and exalted thus into a spiritual state above itself, I take my stand at the birth point of the will (not of the body), and there I say that the Christian child ought to emerge into *individuality*, not as ripened into sin, and set off in it, but as one that is regenerated, quickened unto spiritual life. In other words it is the privilege of the Christian, not that he is doomed to give birth to a tainted life and nease, but that by the grace of God dwelling in him, and in the child, fashioning his own character, as an organic mold for the child, and the child to a plastic conformity with the mold provided, he may set forth the child into life, as a *seed after him*—one that is prepared unto a godly life, by causes prior to his own will, that is, by causes metaphysically organic. Thus every thing previous to the will falls into one and the same category. * * * At some time, sooner or later, but only by a gradual transition, he comes into his own will, which theologically speaking, is the time of his birth as a moral subject of God's government; and if he takes up life, as a corrupted subject, so he may and ought also to take it up, as a renewed subject, that is, *to grow up as a Christian*."[1]

(1) Page 94.

We will not just here examine very deeply into Dr. Bushnell's theory. Suppose it correct, in fact, that many children are brought to the saving knowledge of God at a very early age; he still calls them "*regenerated;*" suppose that through early training, while there was, as Dr. B. would say, a metaphysical organic connection between the parent and child, this should be far more generally the case with the children of pious, than of irreligious parents; or suppose even that sometimes the physical and metaphysical organization of the child of irreligious parents, shall not be so favorable to this early development of piety, as in the child of pious parents. When then? Let us believe all this, and we do believe it; still what is there in it, at all opposed to the Baptist theory?

We may believe that Jeremiah was sanctified from the womb, that Samuel "grew up" so piously from earliest infancy that he was never sensible afterward of any sudden or violent change. It may have been so with John the Baptist and with Timothy. It may have been, and probably was in great part, through pious training and influences on the part of pious parents, that all this took place and at so early an age. It is certainly implied that in the case of Timothy it was. Let all this be granted, and what then? Where does it touch the Baptist theory?

Dr. Bushnell could only reply, 1. That the Baptist theory of Church membership teaches that no persons are fit for the Church until they manifest a sensible religious experience, and 2. It "tells the child that nothing but sin can be expected of him, presumes that he will not grow to a believer, or be eventually sanctified through his parent's faith, and therefore that the rite of baptism is inappropriate."[1]

[1] Pages 28, 9.

1. As to the first, it is indeed and exactly true that, according to the Baptist theory, none are proper subjects for Church membership until they manifest a sensible religious experience. But Dr. B. seems to confound two things that differ mightily: the sensible experiences of grace, and "explosive conversion," or at least "sensible conversion." A person may be sensible of being in a gracious state every day, without remembering possibly when such experiences first began to dawn upon him. With some, these things are more gradual in their manifestations, even in riper years, than with others; much more when they take place in the dawnings of life.

The Baptist theory of "effectual calling" does not depend in whole or in part on *when it takes place.* It only asserts that there must be credible manifestations of its having taken place previous to Church membership. It is not inconsistent with the Baptist theory or practice to baptize a person twenty years after he shall have been converted, if he has neglected it till then. We object, as much as Dr. Bushnell can do, to the taking nothing for evidence of being in a state of grace but "an explosive experience." We believe, practically, that many a true child of grace is long kept in doubt as to his acceptance with God, by looking for some more sudden, violent and "angular" conversion than in the nature of things he can ever realize.

But we also think that, should Dr. Bushnell's statements spread and become popular, there would be another danger more to be dreaded, one pointed out very ably by Dr. Tyler in his letter, *i. e.*, that of the children of pious parents, supposing that usually they were not to expect to pass through any sensible conversion, but ought to "take it for granted" they were in a state of "effectual calling" because

their parents were pious and had had them baptized. Dr. Bushnell has mistaken the extreme revival theory of "explosive conversions" for the Baptist theory, which only insists upon sensible experiences of *being* in a state of grace. But certain it is, if he wants to get rid of a sensible present experience of grace, as a necessary prerequisite to full Church membership, he would do the Congregational Churches of New England the most pernicious evil that has been accomplished in a hundred years. We do not understand him thus. He certainly speaks of all those he calls quickened into spiritual life as "*regenerated.*"[1] But some of his illustrations may seem rather unguarded.

2. But Dr. Bushnell argues further (to quote his own language), that "It must be presumed either that the child will grow up a believer, or that he will not; the Baptist presumes that he will not, that nothing but sin can be expected of him, and therefore declares baptism inappropriate."[2] We suppose Dr. Bushnell and the Massachusetts Sabbath School Committee meant that by *declining to baptize them*, we say so in effect to the child. And, therefore, fighting against this supposed Baptist theory, Dr. Bushnell says, "Who, then, has told you that the child can not have the new heart of which you speak?" And we ask, who has told Dr. Bushnell that the Baptist presumes, in declining to baptize an infant, that he will not grow up a believer, or that he may not even now possibly be sanctified from the womb? And who told him that God presumes that he will? In our view the Supreme Being does not *presume* about the matter, for he *knows*, and so, on the other hand, as we do not pretend to know, neither do we *presume* to decide, or rather decide to presume, about the matter; but as to his joining the Church,

[1] Page 94. [2] Page 28, 9.

wait the developments and manifestations He gives. In our view it would indeed be a presumption to take that *universally* for granted which is, as all must admit, practically, so very doubtful. Yet this is the very essence of the Pedobaptist theory. The whole philosophy of it is a presuming to take for granted that *in every case the child will grow up a Christian from its very birth.* This is the height of presumption. It assumes always a conjunction of three things, no one of which can be shown to occur at all. 1. That the parent shall perfectly discharge his duty. 2. That the Church shall also perfectly do the same; and, 3. That if both of these do thus, God will in every case not only save that child at last, but effectually call it in earliest infancy; so that it shall "open on the world spiritually renewed, not remembering the time when it went through a technical experience." Now this is the philosophy, the ultimate essence of infant baptism, the innate principle of the Pedobaptist theory. It takes for granted that in the case of *every* child baptized, the two former, or human conditions will be perfectly fulfilled, and then it further presumes that the third or divine result will not only eventually but immediately follow. This we think the very extreme of presuming.

And here we must allow Dr. Tyler, a Pedobaptist professor of Theology, to demolish, in his own style, some of the presumptions of infant baptism. Speaking of Christian Pedobaptist parents, in his letter to Dr. Bushnell, he says:

"If God had promised to save all their children, on condition of *entire* faithfulness on their part, they could not appropriate the promise to themselves, for they know they are not *entirely* faithful, but come very far short of their duty.

"And here permit me to ask, when you maintain that if parents were faithful, they might expect to see their children (as a general thing at least) grow up Christians from their earliest childhood, what degree of faithfulness do you consider necessary to insure this result? Must they be sinlessly perfect? If so, what you have written is labor lost, for there are no such parents. But if you mean a degree of faithfulness short of sinless perfection, how great must it be? How faithful must a sinful, erring parent be, to render it certain that God will change the hearts of his children, at the very beginning of life, before they are old enough to receive any verbal instruction?

"There are many parents who are eminently pious, and whose piety shines in nothing more conspicuously than in the education of their children. But they see no evidence that their children are pious. On the contrary, they think they see decisive evidence that they are not."

As to the fulfillment of the conditions on the part of the Church, Dr. Tyler does not speak. We may believe they are not better performed than those of the parents. But in relation to the third point, *i. e.*, the certainty of immediate divine renewal, he says: "Now the question is, has God explicitly informed us in his word, that he will thus early renew the hearts of our children, if we will faithfully discharge our parental duties? Where is any such explicit promise to be found? The duty of the Christian parent is analogous to that of the Christian minister. * * * * It is true that the faithful minister has reason to hope and believe that he will not labor in vain. But when, how, and to what extent God will crown his labors with success, he has no means of determining. God is a holy Sovereign. 'Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy.'

It is true, he employs means, and he gives efficacy to the means of his own appointment; but he does it in his own way and in his own time, and such degrees as seem good in his sight. It is not always true that the labors of the most faithful minister are crowned with the greatest success. Many more souls seem to have been converted under the preaching of Paul than under the preaching of Christ. But surely Paul was not more faithful than his Master. The great aim of the Christian minister should be to do his duty, and to leave the results with God."

We see the two theories contrasted; we see the philosophy of the two systems. It now only remains that we trace some of the chief difficulties and injuries to vital religion, that have naturally and necessarily grown out of the system of infant baptism, as they are exhibited by Dr. Bushnell and Dr. Tyler. It would really seem, from the concessions of these two divines, taken together, that it is impossible to evolve any theory of infant baptism that will not, sooner or later, strangle all spiritual religion in the womb. We are far enough from saying that practically it has always done so. In New England, the Congregational Churches have unquestionably escaped or emerged from this fate, "so as by fire." But then all this is accounted for when we are told, and told truly, that they have "all become Baptists in theory," and ought in all consistency "to become so in fact." [1]

But, viewed historically, what a category of errors has infant baptism introduced, according to Dr. Bushnell's own showing, until, disgusted with the theme, he skips over the period from Gregory Nazienzen, A.D. 350, to Luther, simply saying: "To follow the Church into all the *absurd*

[1] Page 96.

opinions on this subject through which she strayed for *long ages*, is unnecessary. We descend immediately to the Reformation."[1] But even although this might appear a pretty quick leap down the pages of history, it does not seem to carry him to the bottom of the difficulty, of finding one consistent theory of infant baptism. For Dr. Bushnell declares that "here we shall find that *no settled opinion on infant baptism and of Christian nurture has ever been attained to.* Between Protestant standard writers themselves there has been no agreement." "Owen uses language hardly reconcilable with Calvin, unless it can be shown either that all infants who die are elect, or that all elect infants die."

Luther, the German Reformed Church, and the Church of England, throw out opinions of the efficacy of this institution, that "convey a strong scent of the old errors of Romanism. * * * We pass the sea."

But "the New England divines have never agreed, and *do not now*, as to what the covenant is, what meaning and force it has." They "had been accustomed in Europe to State Churches, in which baptism practically gave a title to complete membership." But the Cambridge Platform of 1649 "was on a different principle, allowing none to be members save such as gave evidence of spiritually renewed character." Thus occurred what was "more uncomfortable to most Christians of that age than we can well imagine; the children of their sons and of their daughters often could not be baptized." Hence, in 1662, the half-covenant system, a "mongrel scheme;" the result of which was "undoubtedly bad in theory, as it proved to be in its practical effects."[2]

[1] Page 56. [2] Pages 57–62.

"Mr. Stoddard took the far more dignified and consistent ground" that *both* sacraments are to be regarded as means of grace offered to all of moral life. "Under the combined influence of these two changes, or partly by force of other causes, *religion fell into a serious and alarming state of decline.* Making every allowance for exaggerations, there was evidently a serious decline of piety in the Church." In fact, Massachusetts became Unitarian.[1]

Such have been the results of the Pedobaptist systems, one after another. And yet because Jonathan Edwards "brings them round at length unconsciously to the Baptist theory," as the only remedy, his system is caricatured as one of "extreme individualism," etc. The remarkable part of this is not that the above statements are true, but that they are so plainly admitted and proved in an argument in favor of infant baptism. It was a controversy between two Pedobaptists, and hence the concessions both have made unthinkingly to the truth of our principles.

But now let us observe the "dangerous tendencies" of infant baptism as exhibited in the mind and language of Dr. Bushnell himself. It would seem that, like Dr. Alexander, he came near being a Baptist himself at one time: so near that, even now, when glancing at the relation of his doctrine to the Baptist denomination, he thinks "it may not be indelicate to allude to his own mental experience;" and tells us how near he came to "being rejected by the council at his settlement," because he could say "nothing more positive respecting infant baptism." Such cases are more common than Dr. B. thinks, but there is nothing alarming in this, as none of them are *quite* rejected. It is only those who reject infant baptism altogether, and are baptized on a

[1] Page 64.

profession of their faith, that are altogether refused. On the contrary, they are ordained as Congregationalists. They baptize a few children, and then are driven, by logical necessity, to find some defense for themselves, and then, naturally enough, "what before was dark, or even *absurd*,"[1] becomes "luminous and dignified." We are far from believing that there is a conscious insincerity in such cases. Infant baptism has been associated with many pious sentiments and affections in their imaginations, and where they can not find scriptural evidence for it, they still consider it an edifying and a touching rite. And many things will seem positive evidence of a controverted ceremony constantly practiced in such circumstances.

The main argument which appears to have satisfied Dr. Bushnell's own mind, and that of the Committee of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, when suggested, was, as we saw before, "a law of organic connection as regards character, subsisting between the parent and child; such a connection as induces the conviction that the character of one is actually included in that of the other, as a seed is formed in the capsule."[2]

Now, after making all allowance for his explanations about a "metaphysically organic connection," and acknowledging, as we do, great truth, value, and beauty in very many of his ideas on this subject, yet who can read such language without feeling that his words are not sufficiently guarded; that there are "dangerous tendencies" here; and this arises directly from his rejecting the Baptist theory, which allows full scope for all that is true in what he advances. It is just from trying to advance something "more positive" in favor of the Pedobaptist philosophy than truth will warrant,

[1] Page 82. [2] Page 18.

that he gets into difficulty. We can not see that "it is easy to believe, and natural to expect, that the faith of the one will be propagated in the other." Faith is the gift of God. It can not be produced by any organic connection, physical or metaphysical. Those things which tend to produce or prepare the mind, in a certain sense, for a work of grace, may, and do result from the connection between pious parents and their children. A parent puts a Bible into the hand of his child: unquestionably that book has in it a tendency to prepare the mind for a work of grace—a tendency, if you please, to produce holiness. A parent takes his child to hear the preaching of the Gospel: this has the same influence; yet who would think it judicious to say that it is easy to believe, and natural to expect, that either the Bible or preaching will "propagate faith" in the heart of the hearer or reader.

But whatever modifying effect the parental connection may exert upon different dispositions in the child, it is certainly not correct to say that the character of the one is actually included in the character of the other. It would be unjust to treat the child of an habitual drunkard as "presumptively" intoxicated.[1] Character is the sum of the dispositions, as molded and modified not only by hereditary tendencies and parental influence, but by the air breathed, the climate inhabited, the companions of childhood, by each look, thought, word of every stranger, each accident and action of life, good and bad. Latent tendencies of former generations, fire-side stories, infant tales, the

[1] In other matters, men of common sense wait the development of facts, nor act until they appear; and are we forever in the Church to put fictions and presumptions in their place? This is the real issue between Baptists and Pedobaptists.

school attended, all modify the character. Who, then, can entertain the conviction that the character of the child is "actually included" in that of the parent?

Now, Dr. Bushnell is not merely incautious and incorrect here in his language, but the ideas which he means to convey by it, are, as Dr. Tyler charges, positively full of "dangerous tendencies." And all these incorrect words and dangerous ideas arise from the logical necessity he felt in his own mind of getting hold of "something more positive" in favor of infant baptism than he set out with, or could find in the Gospel. There is nothing in his whole scheme to prevent the child from falling into an error which has been most wide-spread and fatal in all Pedobaptist churches, *i. e.*, that it most probably inherits a pious character from its parents, without any evidence of the fact. This is, indeed, a necessary part of the theory, and Dr. Bushnell, by a necessity of his own mind, brings it out. But Dr. Tyler, and all other Congregationalists, very properly shrink back with alarm from an error that has already proved so destructive among themselves to all spiritual religion.

The Baptist, by not presuming to decide concerning the faith of the child either one way or other, from that of the parent, but watching closely, and requiring in each case sensible present experiences indicative of being in a gracious state, derives all the advantage that can come from the Pedobaptist views, and avoids all dangerous tendencies, both ecclesiastically, of introducing all the world into the Church; and experimentally, of leading those to believe they live who are dead.

We do not mean to say that Dr. Bushnell would practically take it for granted that all baptized children are Christians. This he indignantly denies, saying "ask your-

selves whether it [a passage in his discourse], teaches that Christian parents are to take it for granted that their children are pious?" But notwithstanding his disclaimer, Dr. Tyler has fixed it upon him. Though Dr. B. may not practically wish always to carry it to that length, his language does, when it says, "the character of the one is actually included in that of the other."[1] His system, indeed the whole Pedobaptist theory implies it, more strongly than any words. Of this he himself is witness. For while he calls "baptismal regeneration" "a great error in the form in which it is held," yet in another form it seems to him a great truth, that is to say he proceeds, "The regeneration is not actual *but only presumptive*, and every thing depends upon the organic law of character pertaining between the parent and the child," etc.[2] Infant baptism is, he says, "a seal of faith in the parent applied over to the child on the ground of a presumption that his faith is wrapped up in the parent's faith. It sees the child in the parent, and counts him *presumptively a believer* and a Christian." And yet Dr. Bushnell denies and exclaims, "ask yourselves whether [this theory] teaches that Christian parents are to take it for granted that their children are pious." What else does the word "presume" mean but just to "take for granted," to take before proof or trial or without examination? Richardson so defines this word, and so Webster, and so Crabbe, in substance; only that the latter adds a hint, especially intended, one would think, for the Pedobaptists, and peculiarly for Dr. Bushnell, "we must be careful not to presume upon more than we are fully authorized to take for certain."

Here then is infant baptism declared publicly to teach

[1] Page 18. [2] Page 33.

every time it is administered, what Dr. Bushnell himself afterward, with indignation, repels the charge of teaching, and what Dr. Tyler lifts his hands in horror at, asking, "What Christian pastor would dare take the responsibility of teaching it to the baptized children and youth of his congregation?" But Dr. Bushnell does teach it publicly and so did the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society for a time, by so openly admitting this to be the great lesson of infant baptism.

Yet once more the theory of infant baptism has led Dr. Bushnell, ecclesiastically, and to a dangerous extent practically, to appear as the opponent of sensible experiences of grace and revivals. We have no idea that he would do any such thing deliberately and completely; indeed he says—"Let me not be understood as rejecting revivals of religion," and many of his views on this subject we heartily approve. But unused to the Baptist theory, which consists in sensible experiences of *being in* a gracious state, he confounds quite too much all such things with "explosive conversions" and revivals with a "miraculous epidemic, a fire-ball discharged from the moon," etc. Let any one read the sixty-ninth page of his argument before quoted, and say if such is not the fact.

It is very remarkable, but infant baptism leads him also into theories and views, dangerous from their tendency to produce just the error which the Pedobaptist scheme is thought by its advocates particularly calculated to guard against, *i. e.*, throwing responsibility off the parent in relation to the religious training of the child. Thus he speaks of it as forming a relation "between parents and churches on the one side, and children on the other."[1]

[1] See page 72.

Now, if as Pedobaptist writers say, there is such a tendency in parents to neglect their duty, and throw off their responsibility in regard to their children, will not this dividing of it with the Church, just favor that tendency and really produce a laxity at home—a sense of only a divided or joint responsibility in quarters where God has put it undividedly? There is in this day too much of that already, and what with Sabbath-schools, and catechisms, and among Episcopalians sponsors, the whole work of religious training is left in the hands of the Church instead of where the God of nature and of grace has placed it, in those of the parents.

We value Sabbath-schools as above all praise, but if any other power is systematically to step in between the parent and child on religious subjects, no matter whether it be a Sabbath-school teacher, a sponsor, or an orthodox minister, claiming a kind of official supervision, and a divinely instituted partnership with the parent on behalf of the Church, dividing with him the responsibility, the result will be pernicious to all parties. No parent has a right to form any such partnership. He may not lay off his personal responsibility.

The Baptist theory is both more natural and more scriptural. It holds the parent to be *the* officer appointed of God, for the religious training of his own child. It permits of no shirking of the responsibility by a division of offices. He must make use of such agencies and assistances as he can, Sabbath-schools, Bible-classes, sermons, catechisms, prayers, but he is the responsible supervisor alone. If he neglects his duty palpably, by failing to take advantage of all reasonable facilities, the Church must discipline *him* for neglect but not slip in between him and his own child.

Dr. Bushnell charges the Baptist theory with "excessive

individualism," but the opposite system, it will be seen, naturally tends to downright Socialism. Take the plan of Fourierite communities, and you might almost fancy they had obtained the germ of their thought from the covenant of infant baptism. For "parents *and churches*," read "parents *and communities*" on the one side, and "children" on the other, and you see at a glance all the difference. Both would rather seem poor imitations of the education of Spartan children.

The Baptist view is far more comprehensive. It allows scope and makes provision for parental religious training of children as ample, and more so than the Pedobaptist theory. It is the only scheme that throws the responsibility thoroughly and wholly where it belongs—on the parent; and does not divide it out into as many hundred fragments as there are members of the Church, or deacons, priests, bishops, and cardinals, up to the pope himself.

It provides room for all that is true in Dr. Bushnell's theory of "organic connection," physical and metaphysical, between the pious parent and the child. It provides ample room even for the child to "grow up a Christian," insensible of any particular moment of conversion, yet being truly regenerate, to bow his head like young Samuel, and worship the God of his parents, and partake of the blessings of Christian ordinances. It provides the only scheme for this to be accomplished, without danger of flooding the Church with unbelievers, in requiring that the candidate have present sensible experiences of grace, a conscious daily repentance for sin and walk with God. It is true our scheme does not teach parents or children either to "take it for granted" that this has already taken place without evidence that "the faith of the parent has been propagated in the child" as a

matter of course, through Christian nurture. But the Baptist theory holds as essential the doctrine of regeneration by grace, that natural goodness is not sufficient, that there must be a supernatural work of the Spirit on the heart, a death to sin, and new life to righteousness, in fine, that we "must be born again."

And it leans to sensible conversions and repentance as the most usual manner in which the ranks of the army of Christ are as a whole recruited. And who will doubt that this is the case? Is not this the way in which the multitudes are, and must be brought in, who are not now in a state of grace? Is it not thus that their children will usually be brought even in Dr. Bushnell's own view? And practically is it not thus that the large majority even of the children of all pious parents are brought?

It must never be forgotten that although Christianity is in no respect inconsistent with natural or universal religion, yet that it contemplates man from a different and nearer stand-point. It views him as sick, and comes to him as a remedial rather than a normal system, it views him as in bondage to sin, and sets before him liberty, as a sinner, and brings him salvation. "I came," said Christ, "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." This is the peculiarity of the system. Natural religion regards man as a holy being, needing only to see virtue in order to choose it. Christianity presupposes sin. It does not contradict natural or universal religion. So far as that goes, and can go, well. But the peculiar genius of the Gospel is quite different. It is not that of original health, but of health restored by its own medicines. Its province is that of the physician, and they that are whole need not the physician, but those that are sick.

The head of a family will strive so to regulate the food, clothing, and habits of his children, that they shall maintain uniform health the year round. But yet he knows that owing to a thousand occurrences, they will need medicines, and the physician, and that it would be absurd in his scheme of life to overlook or exclude remedies. To treat his children as always in health, might often cost him their lives.

So the wise and pious parent will strive to train his children so that they may "grow up" in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and as holy as possible. But he will not expect practically this result, without exposure and subjection to sin, and therefore the need of coming to Christ. Generally there will be in the religious history of each, seasons of marked spiritual crisis, and even where they seem to grow up holy youths without sensible transitions from the sorrow of penitence to the joy of pardon, it is only because these things began so early, and take place so constantly, that there never was a day when they were not sensible of them. This it is for them to "grow up Christians."

Such a view of the work of grace on the souls of children, is surely not contradictory, but entirely coincident with spiritual regeneration, and sensible experiences of grace as universally necessary to Church membership. But any other view, however ably advocated, and cautiously guarded, must be full, not only of "dangerous tendencies" always, but destructive results too often.

§ III. Chevalier Bunsen's View of Baptism.

Dr. Bunsen defends infant baptism on much the same general principle as Coleridge and Neander. Yet he goes further than any of them in exhibiting its non-apos-

tolic origin, while yet at the same time defending it on the ground of those Church-State views to which he, Dr. Arnold, and others, are so wedded: views which seem through infant baptism almost inherent in European religion, pressing it down as an incubus. He admits explicitly that Pedobaptism in the modern sense of the word * * * was *utterly unknown* to the early Church, not only down to the end of the second, but indeed to the middle of the third century.[1]

Yet he adds,[2] "Upon closer and deeper reflection it will appear wise to retain Pedobaptism, *but to remodel the whole baptismal discipline.* * * * To this end, in the first place the doctrine of *Biblical baptism must be reformed* in the sense of the German Church, and of the doctrinal works of Schleiermacher, Neander, Nitzsch, and the German school in general. According to this view, our act of baptism forms a whole, the commencement of which is the sprinkling of the child, the conclusion the pledge of the grown up and instructed young Christian sealed by a blessing."[3] Afterward the author admits that which he proposes can only be done "by positively and practically realizing the idea that the baptism of new-born children is the outward sign of the vow *of the parents* to dedicate their child to God as his gift intrusted to them, and to prepare it by a Christian education for becoming a member of the Christian Church, until it be itself able to profess the faith in Christ, and to make the vow of a godly life dedicated to God and the brethren."

Here, then, it is proposed in the first place to "*reform* the biblical idea of baptism," coolly to remodel the whole thing

[1] Hippolytus and his Times, vol. iii. p. 179.

[2] Page 211. [3] Vol. iii. p. 211.

on the basis of historical philosophy, making it the vow of the parent, not the child. All this is done without any more regard for its being the institution of Christ and his Apostles than if it was merely some venerable custom of the middle ages, to be altered, remolded, or taken away, according to the whims and taste of these modern German architects in the work of reconstructing the spiritual temple. It is this ill-disguised disregard, not to say contempt, for the institutions of Jesus Christ and his Apostles which here again, as in the remarks of Coleridge, is the first thing which strikes us in a passage such as the above. Much as we must and may honor the excellent tone and truly Christian spirit of this man, and of his writings generally, it is painful to see him, merely because he has been brought up in the midst of Pedobaptism, defend it on principles utterly subversive of the divine authority of every institution of positive Christianity. Here, in direct disregard of what he had professed at the commencement of his work, *i. e.*, to adhere strictly to the New Testament as a basis, he deliberately proposes to "reform the Bible."

We have then the distinct acknowledgment that the idea which we are to realize in infant baptism is "the vow of *the parents* to dedicate their child to God," and not the vow of the baptized. Yet he has before admitted that "the true purport of the baptism ordained by Christ" is "that no man can be a member of the communion of saints but by *his own* solemn vow."[1] And he has declared[2] that, "When the Church attached rites and promises of blessing to any thing except to the conscious abandonment of sin, and to the *voluntary vow* of dedicating life and soul to the Lord, the longing for real truthful reformation died away in the same

[1] Vol. iii, p. 179. [2] Page 198.

proportion among her members." Thus infant sprinkling, by his own confession, if baptism in any sense of the word, would be "*another baptism*" from that instituted by Christ. So that we have, at best, one Lord, one faith, and *two* baptims.

Nor is this less the case because, at the close of a number of years, he proposes to add on another ceremony, Confirmation, which he forms into the completion of the baptism by the personal ratification and vow of the subject. The best that could be said, would be that there were two baptisms, joined in many cases no doubt, by a connecting link of pious instruction. But in the vast majority of instances, there is practically no such connection, and where there is, the danger then ensues that this very link should cause what he calls the first part of baptism, to draw after it the rest of the chain of profession as a matter of *course*, and without any personal abandonment of sin or spiritual regeneration of the soul. In England, for instance, what do we see but infant baptism followed, *as a matter of course*, by confirmation and communion, whether there be any conscious abandonment of sin or not. So it ever must be, and so it ever will.

Even if there be little or no deep religious instruction, custom is quite sufficient, and it welds the two rites together and draws the young people by links of ceremony from the one form to the other, from infant sprinkling to confirmation, and from confirmation to the communion-table without any vital Christianity. Those who participate in them thu become "confirmed," not in holiness, but in iniquity, "con firmed" in the notion that an impenitent life is not inconsistent with the profession of Christianity.

There is no doubt that the idea more or less prevails where infant sprinkling is practiced in connection with evan-

gelical piety, that however worthless or invalid the baptism may be *in itself* as the appointed Christian profession, yet that being afterward *ratified* by the sincere faith of the party, and his taking upon himself the vows which ought to be made personally in that ordinance, it thereby becomes a valid sacrament. But what would be the advantage of it in case it were? According to this supposition it is in fact no real baptism till ratified by the personal adoption of the candidate; why not then, like the Baptist, defer the rite altogether until the party is able and willing to take these vows upon himself. No power of man, however, could make a bond, drawn up, signed, sealed, and ratified in a manner at all analogous to infant baptism, and its attempted confirmation, worth, as such, the parchment on which it was drawn, on the simple principle that "you can not confirm a nullity."

And yet this is perhaps the most specious argument used as a plea against the duty of believers to be baptized in the present day. "I was sprinkled in infancy," a person will say, "and on becoming a Christian (or perhaps *before*) I took the vows of baptism upon myself; the rite has thus been made valid by my own ratification, however void and unauthorized a ceremony infant baptism may in itself be."

It is unquestionably true that after a person has once taken on himself the vows made by his sponsors at his baptism, he is bound, not only by the general law of his duty to God, but still more specifically by his assumption of the baptismal promises. Yet it does not follow that his baptism is valid. It is the promise he has made, and not the act of baptism that binds him. He may by this, place himself under the obligations to lead the life of the baptized, but can not claim its privileges, without complying personally with its requirements. The following legal decision of Lord

Ellenborough, one of the highest English authorities, and adopted in this country so far as to settle the principle of American Common Law, in such instances, may illustrate the universal instincts as to what is just and fitting in such cases A minor gave a penal bond for £100. On coming of age he ratified and confirmed the bond, but subsequently refused to pay, and pleaded that "the bond being void *ab origine*, can not be ratified and confirmed in any way, because confirmation implies the existence of the thing to be confirmed," that therefore "neither a new promise or new delivery would make the bond good which was originally void." And it was urged on the other side, that if the instrument was set aside it would follow, "that in no possible way could an infant after full age affirm such an obligation." The bond was pronounced invalid on the ground that it required "the act after full age to be of as great solemnity as the original instrument."[1] Hence it is a principle of American Common Law, in such cases, that a penal bond "being void," even if affirmed, the action to recover "must always be founded on the new promise and not on the bond." If, then, such an instrument would not bind a man, how much less shall he have the right to claim the *benefits* of it to himself, as a most solemn covenant.

To make the illustration, however, completely parallel, it ought to be supposed that, instead of the minor having signed the bond himself, his guardian during his infancy should have affixed his ward's name, without his knowledge or consent: what subsequent affirmation or delivery could render such bond a legal instrument, or its seal binding? Any precedence which such a paper might seem to possess would have to be waived; and if the other party were en-

[1] See Maule and Selwyn's Rep. 477.

titled to this precedence it would be the duty of the minor, on coming of age, to give *a new bond* altogether, which would have a force that the old one, however ratified, would not be made to possess.

To apply now this illustration: Baptism is, so to speak, the sealed instrument, acknowledging our obligations to lead a Christian life, and through which we publicly claim the blessings of being Christ's acknowledged disciples. It is a solemn covenant transaction, placing the seal of Christ's disciples publicly upon us. Sponsors and parents may vow and covenant in the name of an infant, but it is without any authority from Him. And beyond all of this we have the confession of Dr. Bunsen that "the baptism of new-born children is the outward sign of the *vow of the parents* to dedicate their child." Arrived at years of discretion, and become a Christian, that child desires to take the vows of God upon himself. How shall he do it? How would he be done by in a similar transaction of daily life.

If any of us had an important covenant depending on such an instrument, and the other party, on coming of age, should wish to receive some great benefit from it, were he to promise always to respect it as valid, and solemnly to ratify what he knew to be a nullity, but refuse to sign a new bond, might it not be a proper reply that at least before he claimed any thing from such an instrument, he should make it what it purported to be? And if it were his duty from any cause to give a legal bond, an acknowledgment or ratification of his father's unauthorized promise to induce him to do it would be no fulfillment of that duty.

Doubtless every such Christian is bound to lead a holy life. But it is his promise that binds him, and not a valid baptism. And such a man has no right to claim any privi-

leges on the ground of such a baptism, the obligation to submit to which remains upon him. Why is it that in the most solemn duties of religion men are willing to put up with what Bunsen rightly names "patchwork and ruins, shams and phantoms," fictions they would esteem utterly worthless and null in the business of daily life? By no subsequent process can a baptism, originally void, be rendered valid. The ordinance being "the sign and seal," which makes it, so to speak, a covenant rather than a mere verbal promise, is, owing to the utter incompetence of the parties at the time (or because the real parties do not covenant at all), worthless and incapable of being rendered good, not having been a profession of his personal faith. Upon these grounds not only Baptists, but all those in other communions who occupy the position of Dr. Bunsen, are bound to treat it as utterly invalid, however afterward affirmed by the personal assumption of its vows.

We have so far supposed the proper *form*, at least, to have been adhered to in the body of the instrument. But in the case of infant baptism, as it is called (and as we have called it from courtesy, but nothing else), all this is reversed, except in the Greek Church. All others have taken away the very thing that alone is the baptism—immersion. They have passed the act, to borrow a legislative figure, without the enacting clause, signed the bond, but torn off the seal, and inserted magical incantations instead of the names of witnesses. Let any one read over the baptismal service of the Episcopal Church for infants, how, substituting sprinkling for immersion, it demands of an infant, but is answered by a sponsor, and declaring it regenerated thereby, contradicts and confuses the most solemn truths, omitting every thing that baptism is, and making it appear every thing

that it is not, even in Dr. Bunsen's view; and then say if such a ceremony is, or can be made a valid Christian Baptism. What lawyer would thus judge of a sealed instrument in any transaction of life beside.

But this, it may be said, only shows the worthlessness, not the injurious consequences of infant sprinkling. Let us proceed, then, to such a passage as the following from the pen of Dr. Bunsen: "In the second place, the superstition that such children of Christian parents as die of tender age unbaptized are under damnation, from which they must be rescued by baptism, is to be put down forever."

This is just, and bold, and admirable, so far as it goes; but must it not suggest to every man this question: Why first teach through infant baptism this fearful dogma, or imply it, as Coleridge admits that the ceremony does, and as infant baptism, viewed in the light of Church history, clearly and ever has done, only at last to contradict the whole? Why not rather defer baptism until the party is old enough to choose for himself? dedicate infants to God by prayer, and any other rites that may seem appropriate as a voluntary religious act, but not pretend to confer baptism until there be in it "the answer of a good conscience toward God,"[1] as well as the washing of the body in water by immersion.

There are passages in the introduction to the third volume of Chevalier Bunsen's work in regard to the need of a second grand reconstructive Reformation, which would favor well the view that, in the judgment of our author, changes quite as sweeping in public sentiment as the restoration of believers' baptism, in place of that of infants, are expected, and sought by the author as necessary steps to

[1] 1 Peter, iii. 21.

the restoration of pure Christianity. He tells us, for instance, that "a severe trial awaits any one who looks primitive Christianity in the face." "You take your stand," he proceeds, "upon the Church; here is its commencement. You take your stand upon the Bible, here is its first apostolical realization. What is required of you is not to substitute scholarship and research for simple Christian faith, much less to set up the idol of philosophy in the shrine of religion. * * * You live in the nineteenth century, one of historical philosophy and of reconstruction. The work to which we are called is unweariedly and humbly to sweep the porch of the temple, to clear the floor. Not to riot as destructives in the darkened chambers, but to bestir ourselves to *restore* and to allow the light of heaven to penetrate within them. It is the rubbish of false learning and conventional scholasticism which separates us from the sanctuary; and it is high time to sweep it away, as the signs of the latter days have appeared, in which infidel superstition intends to sweep the altar, and willful falsehood the throne of truth.

"What is to be done? The question at this moment, is not how to carry out, but *how to prepare a second grand reconstructive Reformation.* The porch of the Temple must first be more thoroughly cleansed than it was in the sixteenth, and above all restored more honestly than it was in the seventeenth century, and lastly the work must be handled more practically than it has been done by the critical German school of this age."

Now surely Dr. Bunsen has conceded every thing. He allows infant baptism to be utterly unscriptural. He concedes the miserable state of religion of Europe, through the corruptions of Christianity; declares that the preju-

dices of men have got to receive "a severe trial" in order to the restoration of primitive Christianity; that this restoration can only be effected through a second grand reconstructive reformation, in which the porch of the Temple shall be cleansed, and more *practically* restored than has yet been done by the learned men of modern Germany—more honestly and thoroughly than by any of the Reformed Churches.

It is strange sometimes to see how the wisest overlook the things which are transpiring under their eyes—how Christians receive the very blessings for which they have been praying, and recognize them not as they come. Had Chevalier Bunsen only looked at home, he might have seen some two hundred Baptist congregations springing up in Germany all within the last twenty years, and *exactly meeting the requisitions above given.*

Of the progress value of the Baptist theory in America, he seems better able to form a just idea, than of the same principles in his own country.

"How little the National Churches of the seventeenth century can make head against the onsets of the Baptists, in countries where a great and free religious movement exists, is evinced by the fact that among serious Christians of the English race, in the United States, the Baptist or Congregational preachers are on the increase more than any other sect, so that they form already the most numerous and most progressive community."[1]

This change is affecting, and has already to a great extent altered the whole texture of American Christianity from that of Europe, having abolished infant baptism to a large extent where it occurs on that continent, and insisting

[1] Vol. iii. p 209.

on personal piety as essential to Church membership. Upon its spread, throughout the world, depends the future spiritual prosperity of Europe, and of mankind, to a degree not easily conceived. A few years ago, and shortly before the death of Neander, some Baptist ministers calling on him with letters of introduction, he conversed very freely and candidly on the baptismal question with them, after a short pause, remarking—"*Ah, there is a future for you Baptists.*"

In the mean time who can forbear to join with Chevalier Bunsen in uttering such language as the following:

"Let every one cleanse his own heart and house as well as he can. When the feeling of the misery which is coming, and a real faith in the saving truth which is in Christ shall have thoroughly penetrated the nations; then will the Spirit of God assuredly come upon them with might, either for the reformation, or the annihilation of the existing churches. Whether this crisis will end in the renewal, or the destruction of the present nations and states, will depend upon the position they take in face of the demands of the Gospel, and the wants of the times. For every nation and age has its time and its day of visitation, after which its fate is sealed.

"This great movement, however, will assuredly not lead to the destruction of Christianity but to its establishment on a firmer basis; not to the lowering of the person of Jesus of Nazareth, but to his greater glorification; and God's Kingdom of Truth and Liberty on earth, will advance as triumphantly over the perishing as over the renovated king loms and states of the present world."

§ IV. The North British Review on Infant Baptism.

"Let us not be misunderstood; we have not wished to breathe the slightest insinuation against the legitimacy and the importance of infant baptism. We have expressed our persuasion that it is a rite unknown to Scripture and that it was probably unpracticed in the apostolic age; but we also firmly believe that it is an institution eminently conformable to the genuine spirit of Christianity, as such warranted by Scripture, and in the highest degree valuable to the Christian Church." [1]

Thus writes the North British Review.

It is with difficulty after making every allowance for the effect of custom and prejudice, that we can understand how a Protestant Christian, how a Presbyterian especially, could pen such lines. In one paragraph the writer hails it as the dawning of a bright day that "Dr. M'Neil, Mr. Litton, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, are perceiving that the practice of infant baptism is not found in Scripture." In the next, he declares that he would not insinuate a word against its "legitimacy and importance!" And yet afterward he urges that religious controversies are every day "assuming more and more the sharp and definite form of an antagonistic struggle between the Christianity of Scripture and the Christianity of Tradition." [2]

True it is, and lamentably true, that in this "antagonistic struggle," the organ of the Free Church of Scotland does *not* wish to breathe a word more against infant baptism than is absolutely forced out of it by the "*pressure of the language of Scripture*," as it says. Its position in regard

[1] August, 1852, p. 211, Amer. Ed. [2] Page 212.

to infant baptism, is like that of Austria at this moment between the pressure of the Allies on one side, and Russia on the other. It admits too much, to make what it reserves decently consistent. It admits that the language of Scripture, applied to infant baptism, would teach the most fearful and fatal errors; that it is a rite "utterly unknown to Scripture;" and yet professes to be not quite sure as to its being unpracticed in the apostolic age; commends it as "in the highest degree valuable," and finds in circumcision "ample authority," and in "every Christian heart an echo" "for the public incorporation of infants into the Church of Christ."

Is it not, then, as plain as the day, that if infant baptism was ever practiced by the Apostles, if it was any thing but a corruption, it must have been *universal* at the beginning? That if circumcision furnishes ample authority now, it did in the first ages? If, in all the language of Scripture, not one word of it will apply to infant baptism, without leading to the most awful consequences, it never could have been known to the Apostles. And it must be utterly *anti*-Scriptural. In another number,[1] this Review, commending Bunsen's ideas of baptism, in which he asserts "*confidently*" that infant baptism was unknown, the reviewer "can not hold this to be *wholly* determined." To us there seems some little want of candor just here, after such a masterly article as most of that from which we continue to quote. "In the absence of all express institution of infant baptism by Christ or his Apostles, we dare not call it a complete sacrament till the consciousness of the baptized person has become capable of fulfilling the spiritual condition of the sacramental blessing, and become susceptible of its recep-

[1] May, 1853, p. 66.

tion." Why not then defer it until the spiritual conditions are fulfilled?

"The celebration of the outward rite, at an age when intelligence is still dormant, separates, in respect of time, the two elements which are necessary to constitute a sacrament; and we have not a particle of authority for supposing that the sacramental virtue can be realized till both elements are present. A spiritual blessing, of necessity implies a spiritual recipient. This momentous truth, which lies at the foundation of the Christian faith, has been forgotten by those who hold that infant baptism is a complete sacrament. They have been betrayed into this forgetfulness by the belief that infant baptism was expressly of apostolical origin, and by the consequent pressure of the language of Scripture. They found spiritual blessings attached to baptism in Scripture, but they found also spiritual conditions imposed upon the recipient. The belief that infant baptism was the institution then spoken of, *involved them in a hopeless dilemma*, from which they vainly endeavored to extricate themselves by overlooking the spiritual state of the infant, and at the same time supposing that God, in some mysterious manner, communicated some equally mysterious blessing to his soul. The very essence of sacerdotalism was involved in this belief. But a mere examination of Scripture has made all clear. *The language of the Apostolic Church does not apply to infant baptism.*"

"The Church indeed advanced * * * to the baptism of infants, but it neglected, while modifying the practice, to modify the rule which guided the interpretation of Scripture respecting it."

Here, then, we find the same trouble growing out of infant baptism in Scotland as in Germany. It avowedly re-

quires that "*the doctrine of Biblical baptism must be reformed*," as Bunsen contends. True, in Bible-loving Scotland, this thing can not be quite so openly expressed as in Germany. There it is simply termed "modifying the *practice*" of the Bible, and then, to make matters more consistent, "modifying the rule which guides the *interpretation* of Scripture." But it all means precisely the same thing. It is an essential remodeling of Christianity, in one of its most important features, the terms of its Church membership, and of Biblical doctrine itself, to suit such alterations. It talks about "*advancing*" to the baptism of infants, beyond all the limits of the Bible, and until it involves all who practice avowedly in endless confusions and contradictions, so that they have to modify and remold all the rules which guide their interpretation of the Scriptures themselves.

Thus, whether we examine the defenses of infant baptism by Coleridge or Bushnell, by Bunsen or by the "North British Review," all concur in showing a fearful list of the most injurious consequences accompanying in all ages.

CHAPTER VI.

MIXED COMMUNION UNWISE AND INJURIOUS.

MANY excellent Christians say that they agree with the Baptists in every thing but this, that they would like all whom they consider Christians admitted to the communion of their Churches. This, as we have seen, is Dr. Bunsen's chief objection to them; he can not see why Pedobaptists

should refuse to join in Church relations with Baptists, or the converse.[1]

If Baptists were wrong in regard to this practice, there is then nothing to prevent members of Churches, heretofore Pedobaptists, being baptized and forming open communion Churches in which both of these parties should be on terms of perfect equality. Yet neither in this country nor in England, that we know of, has a single Pedobaptist Church thus altered its character in the last two hundred years. In many cases they do practically admit those who will not have their children sprinkled, and sometimes even allow their members to be baptized; but their creeds require a belief that infant baptism is scriptural, and their preaching upholds it. Their ministers are expected to perform it, and the whole weight and influence of the Church, as an organization, is exerted in its favor.

Many instances have occurred in England of churches originally Baptist, carrying open communion sentiments so far as to elect Congregational pastors, and even using the font and the baptistry in the same house of worship; but other denominations have never been inclined to meet Baptists in this matter, justly fearing, no doubt, that it might bring *all* ordinances into contempt. Nor have Pedobaptist Churches ever been in the habit of publicly inviting, even to occasional communion, those who had not in their opinion been baptized, such as Quakers, etc. That the views of such men as Bunyan and Robert Hall arose from a truly noble and liberal disposition none can doubt, and many Baptist Churches have tried the principles they proposed. Pedobaptists never have, though many have professed to admire the arguments of Robert Hall. There is, then, no

[1] See p. 16, and Hippolytus, vol. iii. p. 215.

justice in the charge so often made against the Baptist denomination for illiberality in not accomplishing what its members alone have attempted to effect. Where is the Church, originally Pedobaptist, that has felt itself constrained to admit all pious persons, even if unbaptized, to the Lord's Supper, to a full and perfect membership in any numbers, with an equal right to vote, even to elect officers, or to become officers themselves, as well as to preach and administer ordinances only as they conscientiously believed correct?

If this were the divinely appointed principle of visible Church membership, Pedobaptists ought not, in any way, to require infant baptism or any particular form of government in their Churches. The revolution which would then take place in other denominations would be quite as great as any proposed in our own. When they have tried this experiment and succeeded in it, they may blame us perhaps for bigotry. But until then the case stands thus—some Baptists have, from the most liberal views, tried it, but it has not been found conducive to prosperity, and many of them deny that it is correct in principle. Robert Hall advocated this plan on the only equitable and reasonable basis. He says that were the practice he proposed universally to prevail, "the mixture of Baptists and Pedobaptists in Christian societies would probably, ere long, be such that the appellation of Baptist might be found not so properly applicable to Churches as to individuals."[1] And he calls this his leading position, "that *no* Church has *a right* to establish terms of communion which are not terms of salvation."[2] Indeed he would make it a matter of indifference whether the ministers of the Gospel were themselves baptized or unbaptized,

[1] Works, vol. ii. p. 228. Harper. [2] Works, vol. i. p. 359.

or what their views were upon any subject of theology, provided they were esteemed to be Christians.

The following is the history of this whole question. Before the year 1600, several of the Puritans who had left England and joined the Brownists or Independent Church in Holland became Baptist, there being many of that persuasion around them. For this "*they were excommunicated by the rest.*"[1] This led to the formation of an English Baptist Church in Holland, which afterward moved back and settled in London. Before this time the practice of English Baptists seems to have been various. There were some Churches distinctively Baptist, and there were Baptists, at least in sentiment, mixed up in other churches. Certain it is that in 1633, in an Independent Church, enough of its own members, who did not believe in infant baptism, asked and received their dismissions to form a distinct Church on Baptist principles.

It is probably owing to circumstances such as these that some of the churches in England became mixed communion and some strict. When Bunyan wrote in defense of the former practice it was not, however, general in the denomination, nor did it become so, until the influence of Robert Hall's writings gave it a currency in England it has never obtained in this country. For a time the splendor of his essays on this subject dazzled and delighted all. And by degrees the practice he recommended became exceedingly current in the Baptist Churches of that country. To such lengths were matters carried, that many openly declared themselves not Baptist Churches in any sense of the word, or attached to any particular denomination, but simply Christian. Sprinkling and immersion were performed in

[1] See Struggles and Triumphs, p. 197.

the same house of worship, as they are in some of these places to this day. Pedobaptist ministers were called and settled as pastors when the numbers of persons of that persuasion became the majority, as they must frequently in a country where the proportion of Baptists is so exceedingly small. They were sometimes preferred as able and willing to accommodate all parties, which Baptists could not. The result of this was found to be that while Baptist Churches lost their distinctive character and influence, the Pedobaptist Churches lost none of theirs. And thus the question naturally evolved itself, whether it was the duty—whether it was *right*, in fact, in those who conscientiously believed in Baptist sentiments, to give up so powerful a source of influence in their favor as that of church organization. The result seems to have been very generally a practical conviction, even in the minds of all English open communionists, that the Pedobaptists and Regular Baptists of this country were right so far as this at least, that the maintenance of the ordinance of Baptism is committed in charge to the visible churches as such—that it is one of the specific objects for which they were instituted and that they may not lay aside this means of extending their influence.

Hence most of the English Churches now do not allow Pedobaptists to become fully members of the Church in the sense of voting or having any share in the government, but simply to commune. Thus the Church is Baptist though the communicants may be half Pedobaptist. This is a quiet but complete abandonment of Robert Hall's theory, and of the principle of mixed communion, while retaining its practice. For it is quite clear that the maintenance of the two ordinances devolves on the same body of men. If baptism is committed to visible Churches as such, so is

also the Lord's Supper, and they are *both* Church ordinances. The only possible question is, whether occasional participation ought or ought not to be governed by the principles which regulate habitual Church communion.

In this country there never has been the same hesitation on these questions, owing in part to the more rapid manner in which all practices are here pushed back until they rest upon their ultimate principles, and are carried out to their legitimate consequences. Another cause more immediately historical is that in their early origin in this country, the Baptists were driven off by the action of their opponents, excluded on the plea of anabaptism from their Church fellowship, and thus forced into the position of uniting as an entirely distinct denomination. The earliest Baptist Churches were in this way formed by the action of Pedobaptists who drove them together by banishing those who embraced these views alike from their Churches and from their colonies, and punished them for preaching in their cities or being found in their streets. The Churches thus formed grew, because they were founded on principles of truth and of enormous, though unperceived, importance to all vital Christianity. It was soon found also that the very exclusion of them from other communions, by driving them into Church relations with each other, enabled them more fully to preach, act out and practice upon their principles. This was the means of a combined strength and rapid propagation of their views by that immensely superior force which every social organization has over an equal number of men unorganized—and above all by that which the presence of the Saviour confers upon every two or three gathered together in his name.

In the course of time good men became united in Mas-

sachusetts, and by degrees all over the country the prejudices against them gave way, until now the chief complaint against them is that of Bunsen, that they remain a distinct denomination.

The question, therefore, has resolved itself into this practically, having by the providence of God, and the action of others, been formed on principles of organization, very powerful for the dissemination of what they are convinced are important truths, is it now their duty to alter these principles so as to surrender that peculiar power, especially while all Pedobaptist Churches retain it on their side, and apply it to the support of infant baptism?

But apart from the danger of forsaking a position in which they are placed by Providence, and endorsed by the course of all others, the fact which has ultimately decided their position is, that the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper being committed to the visible Churches of Christ, as such, for maintenance and extension, it is their *duty* to throw their whole proper weight as a divine institution, in favor of the correct and regular observance of both these sacraments. But this is impossible, if they associate themselves on an equality in the visible Churches, with those whose belief, practice, and influence are erroneous on these subjects, and paralyze their own. Hence, in this country it seems to be generally admitted as a truth, that without loving each other less, all Christians can act more efficiently by resolving themselves into churches, constituted on their own views in regard to those Divine ordinances which it is part of the duty of those organizations as such, to uphold.

If infant baptism *is* a divine institution, the Pedobaptists are right in preaching about it, and practicing it as a visible

Church ordinance, and the best way of testing the matter is for all those who conscientiously believe thus, to carry it out in action to its legitimate results. On the other hand, if believer's baptism is alone divinely appointed, if Baptist principles have the distinctive power and utility which has been shown, it is not only the right but *the duty* of all who believe these truths, to act up to them by uniting in churches, the weight of whose public and social influence is in favor of all those objects for which particular churches are organized at all.

To carry out any other principles, every Presbyterian and Congregational, and Methodist Church must give up all the denominational peculiarities of its organization. Baptists ought to be admitted to a full and hearty equality in all evangelical Churches—admitted, not only as members but as officers, and allowed to preach their views and act out their sentiments, as freely and fully as Pedobaptists, or with such differences only as fluctuating majorities might rightly impose upon conscientious minorities in the same Church, all having equal privileges of opinion and of voting. In fine, it would do away with every thing like a constitution derived from the New Testament, beyond the simple fact that each person must be a society of those supposed to be pious persons, however heterogeneous their views. This might be a Church of Christians then, but would not be a Church of Christ. The whims, opinions, and heresies of good men, however dangerous, would all be entitled to equal support. Augustine believed in baptismal regeneration, and Fénélon in purgatory. Foster shrank from endless punishment, while Milton advocated divorce at pleasure, and Massillon adored the Virgin Mary. Must we then either deny the personal Christianity of such men as these,

or admit any numbers of them if supposed to be pious, who may wish to join all our churches as members or ministers, to advocate any of these views? Are they to have liberty not only to advocate them, but to act them out, to seek the intercessions of saints and virgins, to baptize children, or pray for the dead? Must we have a quiet corner for the confessional, with an altar and a crucifix to conciliate the conscientious Papist? Must we alter the marriage vow, and provide for its amicable termination, to accommodate the disciples of Milton? And yet it would all necessarily follow from mixed communion principles, as stated by Robert Hall himself, in that "we are expressly commanded to tolerate in the Church those diversities of opinions which are not inconsistent with salvation."[1]

When the Churches of other denominations are prepared for this, they may rightly complain. At present, the Constitution of all Pedobaptist Churches pledges their members individually, and the whole weight and moral influence of the Church collectively, to the support of infant baptism. In the Episcopal Church, meager as its articles are in regard to many other parts of ecclesiastical polity, they yet particularly specify that infant baptism "is in any wise to be retained in the Church." (Art. 27.)

Our Methodist brethren have the same article in substance (Art. 17), and it is made "the duty of every minister of a circuit, or station, to obtain the names of the children belonging to his congregation, * * * and diligently to instruct and exhort all parents to dedicate their children to the Lord in baptism, as early as convenient." In answer to the question, "How improper persons shall be kept from joining the Church?" the answer is, "Let none be

[1] Terms of Communion, part ii. sec. 2.

received into the Church until they are recommended by a leader, with whom they have met at least six months on trial, and have been baptized, and shall, on examination by the leader in charge, before the Church, give satisfactory assurances both of the correctness of their faith and their willingness to observe and keep the rules of the Church."[1]

Among the Presbyterians, both their Confession of Faith and their Larger and Shorter Catechisms declare that "the infants of such as are members of the visible Church *are to be baptized.*" In their form of government, they utterly set themselves against the principles on which alone mixed communion could be advocated, and declare that all their baptized members of the Church are "bound to perform all the duties of Church members."[2]

It would not even be sufficient for Pedobaptists simply to be willing to break down their church walls so far as to receive *Baptists* to a full and perfect equality in the Church, in order to make the cases parallel, seeing that they fully admit the baptisms of these latter, who, however, are unable to acknowledge theirs.

The following objections to mixed communion will be felt both by conscientious Pedobaptists and Baptists.

1. *If it were simply lawful, and not absolutely commanded, it would be inexpedient, as calculated to make all ordinances obsolete*, by bringing them into contempt. Whether the notion be scriptural or otherwise, it always has been supposed that the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper belong appropriately to the visible Churches of Christ, *as such.* The Lord's Supper, for instance, is celebrated in the Church as a general rule, and members are commanded

[1] Discipline, chap. ii. sec. 2.

[2] Book i. chap. i. ii. and Book ii. of Discipline, chap i.

"to tarry one for another." Both ordinances are administered by the presiding officer of the Church, specially to intimate that it is performed as an official act of him, *as their minister*. What then, must be the effect, if, in the same body, all kinds of different views in regard to the ordinances prevail? Either there would be perpetual bickerings, or else complete and compelled silence, leading to indifference. The latter, as the only course of equitable peace, would soon prevail. The Baptist conscientiously believes infant sprinkling to be invalid to the individual and injurious to the religious community. The Pedobaptist would dislike to sanction the baptism of an adult who had been sprinkled in infancy, esteeming it an improper repetition of the ordinance—*ana*-baptism. The officers of a church, anxious not to wound the feelings of any brethren, would keep these occasions of difference out of sight; neither infant baptism nor that of adults would be upheld from the pulpit. The duty of submission to the rite in *any* way would cease to be enjoined. It would be shunned as a matter of conversation generally among members, or those who spoke freely about it would be liable to discipline for disturbing the peace of the Church. Thus baptism, that ordinance which is placed so conspicuously in the New Testament, would necessarily be treated with utter disregard—banished the Churches.

But if expelled the Church, where could it find a home? For that, as we have seen, is its appropriate place. It has thus far ever been administered as the official act of the Church; but its officers would feel that they were never acting in the name of the whole Church, but of a divided body, let them administer it as they might. They would hardly like to perform it, and when done, it would be al-

most by stealth. But if the spirit of the Church really discountenanced *any* form of baptism within its walls, all baptism would certainly be despised and become obsolete, and this with very far more rapidity than infant baptism itself, fostered by Churches and upheld by ministers, has yet done. Thus, from an ostensible regard for the Lord's Supper, all baptism would be discarded.

But this would be certain to react upon the Lord's Supper itself. A body which avowed itself not called on to defend the one institution, could find no authority to enforce the other. If the Church, as such, is not an institution appointed to uphold baptism, it has no more authority in regard to the Lord's Supper. The whole would be a private matter, perfectly optional, observed only by a few of the stricter brethren, and all ordinances, and of course all discipline, disjointed and disunited, would drop to pieces as a rope of sand.

2. But, beyond all this, the principle upon which mixed communion rests *involves a breach of trust*, because baptism and the Lord's Supper are committed to the custody and guardianship of the visible Churches of Christ, as such, which are the trustees, the administrators of these ordinances, by a divine appointment.

It must be quite evident that they are committed to the care of *some* agents. They are not simply enjoined in the Bible, and left without any to defend them, against abuses and attacks, or to exhibit their divine authority and the duty of submitting to them, none being responsible for administering them to proper subjects, and to those alone. On whom does this responsibility officially devolve? We know that one important duty of the visible Churches of Christ is to uphold the doctrines of the Gospel, and to

spread them before the whole world. It is thus that they exhibit their character as the golden candlesticks supporting the light of divine truth in the world, trimmed and filled with the oil of grace by the hand of Christ himself. But is it only doctrines that give light? Is there nothing luminous in the ordinances of the Gospel? To whom then is the maintenance of these institutions committed? Whose duty is it to uphold and to administer them, but those Churches of Christ regularly constituted, according to the institution of the Gospel?

If we consider baptism, for instance, who can doubt that the visible Churches were intended, among other objects, to support and maintain this ordinance. Such certainly has been the instinctive feeling of Christians in all ages. When first the commission was given to preach and to baptize, there was but one visible Church on earth. And the commission seems to have been delivered *twice*. First to the eleven privately; at which time Christ does not say any thing specifically about the *administrator* of baptism, only its administration.[1] Secondly on one of the mountains of Galilee, where he met with his disciples, by a solemn and long-standing appointment. There were clearly, on this last occasion, many others present besides the eleven, some of whom up to that time doubted. This is probably the occasion on which he met the five hundred brethren at once, as Robinson has shown.[2] "He therefore" says this sound critic, "here takes leave on earth of those among whom he had lived and labored longest, and repeats to all his disciples, in public, the solemn charge which he had already given in private to the Apostles, 'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, and lo, I am with you always, even

[1] Mark, xvi. 16. [2] Notes to English Harmony, § 170.

unto the end of the world.'"[1] This commission, then, appears to have been given to the visible Churches as such.

Afterward when the first great missionary enterprise was undertaken, Acts, xiii. 1, although St. Paul as an Apostle of Christ was to be an officer in the Churches among all nations, it was still to the Church at Antioch that the Spirit said "separate unto me Barnabas and Saul," and to it they returned and gave an account of their labors. So that during the life-time and service of these extraordinary ministers it was still *through* the Churches that the work of conducting even missionary operations and baptisms was conducted.

It has by many been supposed that baptism was specifically committed to the ministry as such. If this were conceded, the question would then arise if it was not committed to them *as officers of the visible Churches.* The Apostles indeed might have claimed a more direct commission. But they were extraordinary officers connected with the first establishment of Christianity, and have left no successors. All the distinctive powers of ministry now come to them through the relations they sustain to the visible Churches. This is clearly the case in regard to pastors and deacons, neither of whom have any peculiar prerogatives in any other Church than their own, *except by courtesy and invitation;* not of right. Evangelists have been considered officers rather appointed to labor outside the bounds of any Church for the conversion of the world. But still they are always called to engage in this work by some visible Church of which they are members, through whom their credentials are received. Indeed originally every Church member, as such, was an Evangelist wherever he could be, Acts, viii. 4.

[1] Page 215.

As Neander has shown, and all early Church history proves, the distinction between the clergy and laity was much less marked at first than it afterward became.[1] In regard to the administration of baptism, this was quite as much the case as teaching. It belonged to the original priesthood of all, at first, or was at least committed to them except as limited by the Church.

The Apostles seem to have avoided the administration of it themselves. Peter *commanded* Cornelius to be baptized by some of those brethren who accompanied him instead of administering it himself. Hillary, in the fourth century, commenting on Eph. iv. 11, 12, says, "at first, before Churches were every where established, all taught and all baptized;" and again he says, "it was conceded to all to evangelize and to baptize." As Mosheim says, "at first all who were engaged in propagating Christianity administered this rite, nor can it be called in question that whoever persuaded any person to embrace Christianity could baptize his own disciple. But when the Churches became more regulated and provided with rules of order, the bishop alone exercised the right of baptizing."[2] But then the bishop or pastor could not do it *against* the voice of the Church, of which he was head, and whose consent to it was always either expressed or implied, so that it was by or through the Churches that the baptism was administered. During the early persecutions none but those who were fit would desire baptism; hence it needed but little discretion and the Church gave impliedly a general commission to each of its disciples to administer the rite in its behalf. Afterward more care was needed, and it was restricted to the

[1] See also Merle D'Aubigné's Hist. Reform. vol. i. pp. 16, 17.

[2] Cent. 1, part ii. chap. iv. sec. 8.

chief officers of the Church. But in all this the Church really administered the rite, the individual only acted as its organ.

But if now Christ has committed this ordinance to the visible Churches and given them on earth the duty of maintaining it, then it is contrary to the most obvious principles of common sense that a Church should do right in admitting in any numbers and to an equal share of the government those who neglect in practice and even oppose on principle that which Baptists have shown alone to be true baptism. So far then from its being true as Robert Hall contends, and as many suppose, that we are "expressly commanded to tolerate in the Church all those diversities of opinion which are not inconsistent with salvation," some of the very objects for which visible Churches were founded, must be utterly frustrated by the adoption of this principle.

No person doubts that in primitive times every one was baptized prior to being admitted to the Lord's table or the Church. The Rev. Baptist Noel gave it as his own reason for submitting to this ordinance, that to approach the Lord's table conscious of not being baptized "would be to act contrary to all the precedents of Scripture," and Robert Hall concedes that "the members of the primitive Churches consisted of only such as were baptized."

The only question is whether all this was a mere casual circumstance as Robert Hall contends, or whether it was from an *instituted* connection. Surely what we have shown above proves it to have been a part of the great *common law* of primitive Christianity; a custom that arose in the divine will, and had in it all the force of a fundamental constitution, since it is clearly essential to one of the purposes for which Churches were established, *i. e.*, the perpetua-

tion of baptism by precept, example, and administration. This connection is obvious in the nature of things.

To all this but one objection has ever been suggested. In the minds of many, there is the idea of a body intermediate as it were between the separate visible Churches of Christ and "The Universal Church," which is invisible. This body they sometimes call "the Universal Church visible," and it is supposed to consist of all those who make *a credible profession* of the Christian religion throughout the world, whether they possess it or not. To this body rather than the smaller separate bodies they suppose the ordinances to be in truth committed.

There can be no objection to the figurative conception of such a body by throwing all the separate Churches into one, just as a Gibbon might speak of the "several detachments of that immense *army* of Northern barbarians," which in the course of successive centuries overran Southern Europe. Yet as in such a case we should not conceive of a body under one general, or in fact, any more one than as actuated by a common purpose which moved distinct tribes and organizations, so we can not accurately speak of any one visible earthly Church, having constitution, officers and powers separate from the visible Churches which are each independent bodies. This Robert Hall has fully admitted.[1]

To any idea of a proper Church Universal Visible, there are overwhelming objections. There is not any such body and never has been since the scattering of the first Church in Jerusalem. Even at the resurrection we shall be received according to our membership or otherwise in the *invisible* Church. Not by the profession of religion, but its possession.

[1] Terms of Communion, part 2, sec. 3.

If there were any such body, it would be without any government, or assemblies, or discipline, or visible organization. So that it can only exist as an imaginary rather than a real power—a body vaguely conceived of, but the limitations of whose membership are variously viewed by every different Christian without any being more certainly correct than the other. It would be in fact no more one and the same body, than the rainbow which a thousand persons stationed at different points might behold at one time. Each would see but one bow, but no two would behold the same.

Whoever will look into Church history will find that though the idea of a Church Universal Visible was an error which commenced very early, yet it originated in confounding the outward profession of religion with its inward reception—visible Churches with the Church invisible; and that it was from this confusion all the worst errors of Popery naturally and necessarily evolved themselves. This idea, revived by Dr. Pusey, has carried back several into the bosom of the Church of Rome, and multitudes to her gates.

It has been a matter of dispute between Presbyterians and Congregationalists if the term Church (εκκλησια) is ever used in the sense of a *Visible* Church Universal as distinct from the Church *invisible* in the New Testament. Robinson in his Lexicon of the New Testament makes no distinction of the kind. The chief passages favorable to such a view are considered in my work on communion.[1] If the term is ever so used either in the New Testament or by us, it can only be in a figurative manner.

Baptism is, therefore an ordinance, the duty of perpetu-

[1] Pages 282–4.

ating which is committed to the *visible* Churches as such. But a Church by receiving unbaptized persons to their membership incapacitates itself for rightly fulfilling this trust, as we have seen.

And if this be true of baptism, how much more obviously true is it of the Lord's Supper. It in like manner is a visible Church ordinance, one in which the members are on this account commanded to "tarry one for another." To these Churches, as such, the injunction is addressed to "*do this*" in remembrance of Christ. The whole regulating power in regard to it is clearly committed *to them*, such as deciding when and where it shall be administered, who shall and who shall not participate. They are to put away the impure and receive back the penitent, to exhort and urge the doubting and the lingering, and by preaching and example perpetuate the celebration of this ordinance to the end of time. Let any one read, in the most cursory manner, 1 Corinthians, xi. 18–34, and he will see the full proof and illustration of all this. The Church is there spoken of as "coming together" in assembly to eat the Supper,[1] and those as "despising the Church"[2] who conduct improperly in that ordinance. And the Apostle declares to the Church at Corinth that he had "*delivered*" it into their charge just as he had received it into his, as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus.[3]

It is not only committed to their care, but is to be administered among them as a symbol among other things of that fraternity which they bear to each other as such. It therefore unquestionably indicates visible church relations as subsisting among all who by right unite together in its celebration.

[1] Verse 18. [2] Verse 22. [3] Verse 23.

Occasional communion by invitation must follow therefore the principles established for the regular celebration of this ordinance. We may not bend the rule to the exception, but the exception to the rule. And yet the whole charge of intolerance, brought against the Baptists by other denominations, must rest upon just this basis, and no other, *i. e.*, that they do not make an exception in favor of irregularity, or break down well-established and admitted general principles to accommodate exceptional occasions.

A distinction is attempted sometimes to be drawn between an admission to participate with us at the Lord's Table, and an admission to fellowship with us in the same Church. "It is *the Lord's* Table," it is urged, "and hence we dare not deny any who are the Lord's children." But would the same persons be willing to carry this out to its legitimate conclusion, that it is our Church and *not the Lord's*, seeing that we may refuse to admit to the one those whom we are bound to receive to the other. No, surely it is the Lord's Table and it is the Lord's Church. Both are given by Christ for specific purposes, and the former is among other things the symbol of the other. The symbol can not be appropriate where the thing signified is wanting, and hence even *occasional* communion must follow the regulations of Church membership. Robert Hall cheerfully admits this throughout the whole discussion." [1]

[1] Our Methodist brethren seem to admit the principle in their Book of Discipline:[1] "No person shall be admitted to the Lord's Supper among us who is guilty of any practice for which we would exclude a member of the Church."

The Old School Presbyterian General Assembly admitted it fully a few years ago, when being invited to unite with the New School body at the Lord's Table, with whom they had dissolved their former ecclesiastical

1. Chap. i. sec. 23, 3.

Baptists simply regard the Lord's Supper as a visible Church ordinance, and those who partake by special invitation, as members for the time being, not destroying or altering the ecclesiastical character of the feast, nor making it as many loosely suppose it, a mere local celebration of membership in the Church universal, either invisible or visible. They do not wish to facilitate the extension of an error which has broken down the original liberties of Christ's Churches, and hatched Popery. They therefore repudiate in common with very many Pedobaptists, every thing which involves such mischief.

We may, to make this distinction more clear, regard the evangelical movements of the present day, the Bible and Tract Societies, Evangelical Alliances, and Young Men's Christian Associations, as partial embodiments of this supposed *visible* Church Catholic. By what instinct is it then that so uniformly at their anniversaries while their members unite in demonstrations of *Christian* fellowship, they do not esteem it appropriate to unite in celebrating the Lord's Supper. It is because they have instinctively felt that by so doing they would be in symbol forming themselves into a visible Church, and so interfere with the ecclesiastical arrangements of their various bodies. It is not for want of *Christian* fellowship, nor does it even assert that they do not esteem each other worthy of a place at the Lord's

connections, they declined to do so, substantially upon this very ground. And yet how many persons assail the Baptists as uncharitable, not for regulating their Church membership as they do, and as all do, but for not inviting to commune with them those whom they could not welcome to their churches. To Baptists it seems that such invitations, where extended, must appear like ostentatiously inviting a neighbor into the piazza, but carefully shutting the door of the house.

Table in their own churches. All we ask is, that our abstaining from uniting with other denominations in that ordinance, may not be more harshly construed by our Christian brethren than their own in the circumstance named. We have the more right to expect this, as in our own denominational Associations and Conventions, and missionary anniversaries, we never unite in any of those capacities in celebrating the Lord's Supper. If it is done at all, it is by the invitation of the Church with which we meet. This is not because we doubt the fitness of our own brethren, certainly, for the ordinance in question, but because we consider the Lord's Supper as belonging specifically to visible churches as such, and would guard against the idea of symbolically clothing our voluntary associations with Church authority.

This is no modern opinion. There are proofs abundant that it is the primitive view of the Lord's Supper, long preserved even after the idea of a Catholic Church visible had seriously affected the independence of churches. From the time when the Ignatian Epistles were written, down for several centuries, the motto of "but *one altar* to a church," even where that church embraced in fact several congregations, was in practical operation. And the care with which it was managed that each distinct visible bishopric or church should have its own altar, or place where alone the Eucharist might be consecrated, is a clear proof that it was esteemed an original and important truth, that the Lord's Supper was an ordinance committed and belonging to the visible Churches, as distinct from any one universal visible Church.[1] There is, as we have seen, in 1 Corin-

[1] See Bingham's Christian Antiquities, book viii. chap. vi. sect. 16, 17; Curtis on Communion, 89, 90.

thians, xi. 18–34, direct proof that this idea belongs originally to the New Testament, and is in fact part of that universal usage which marks it as one of the most radical elements of the constitution of the churches.

Thus, then, it is clear that the Lord's Supper is given in charge to those visible Churches of Christ, in the midst of which he has promised to walk and dwell. Rev. ii. 1. To each of these it belongs to celebrate it as one family. The members of that particular Church are to be tarried for, and it is to be a symbol of their relations, as members, to each other. Other things are no doubt signified also, but this none the less. In all ordinary cases, it should be partaken of by each Christian in the particular Church of which he is a member. Here is the home of ordinances, and this is one of the purposes for which these bodies are instituted; not alone for the defense of Gospel doctrines, but for the advocacy and celebration of Gospel ordinances.

What is more, the guardianship of these rites is committed to them *alone*. If they neglect it, there are no other persons to supply their lack in discharging this duty. What then can be more certain than that their own united obedience and hearty belief in them must be preserved? Nor are they at liberty to enter into any compromise or deviations from the original practice of the Church, which shall impair their capacity for fulfilling these purposes of their institution.

It is one of the specific objects of their union to uphold these things as *aggressive bodies*, and not merely as receptive. The power of organized bodies of men to propagate any truth, or revive one that has been overlooked, is naturally immense. It emboldens the timid and decides the wavering. It incites to action, because it exhibits truth in

action. Another and a greater source of power is the present and indwelling Spirit of Christ. A Church, therefore, is both a human and a divine institution. As in man, by the union of soul and body, one person is formed, of powers greater than many unitedly would possess with but one of these alone, so is each visible Church of Christ endowed with resources, strength, and influence illimitable for good, and far transcending the sum of its individual human powers. Its effect on the customs of society, for instance, are incalculable. The morals and manners of a nation, and of an age, its intelligence, even its form of government, will generally have their archetype in the congregations of its saints.

He who has given to these bodies their peculiar strength —who first applied the power of voluntary social organization to religious purposes in His own Churches, and has guarded, guided, and actuated that power ever since,—He has committed two sacramental ordinances specially to their care, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These, as mere outward signs, might seem of little importance; but that He has connected with them, in a remarkable manner, a whole system of doctrines and practice, of which He has made them the symbols and exponents, to which indeed He has united them in a unique manner, so that practically the severing of them should no more be thought of than the disuniting of the body and the soul. He has made it the duty of these organizations to convert the world to this system of Christianity, in all its wholeness, just as He delivered it to them, the parts balanced like the various parts of man, and adjusted by His own hand. They have no right to proclaim baptism or the Lord's Supper without the faith they symbolize, nor yet, on the other hand, the

faith without the symbols. The body without the soul is a mere carcass. And the soul without the body is too ethereal—it can not be realized in the present state. Symbol is the appointed dwelling-place for piety, as the body for the spirit.

To the churches Christianity is thus committed in its symmetry and wholeness. The Bible is indeed its text-book and standard. But each church is a *living* body to which the Saviour has given in charge both the oracles and ordinances. It is for these churches to draw sustenance from the Scriptures and propagate the system of life they find through the whole earth, by their divine powers, example, and organization. "Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord." "Ye are the light of the world."

The Church and the Bible stand in the same position to the guilty dying world that the physician and his books stand to the sick patient. The patient looks upon the physician as the living embodiment of his books. So the sinner looks to the Church as the authorized exponent of what Christianity, as a system, *is*. Whether rightly or wrongly, each Church of Christ is thus regarded by the great masses of men. From this they derive far more of their religious ideas than from any other source. These two ordinances, then, should be upheld by the churches in living exhibition, just in the same position as they are placed in the New Testament, and all must admit that they stand very prominently in the sacred volume.

The admixture of Baptists and Pedobaptists in the same Church would be a great hinderance to *both*. All agree that it is a duty of visible churches as such to uphold baptism to the best of their knowledge and power, although not uniting as to the nature and subjects of baptism. But

mixed communion churches are formed upon the basis of being neutral on the whole question, and thus the very principle of their organization is diametrically opposed to one great object for which they are constituted. These ends will not be accomplished by uniting those who differ at the zero of indifference in regard to ordinances. The truth will best finally be exhibited by each accomplishing separately what they conceive to be their respective missions, and maintaining the truth in love.

The author is aware that in some of the pages of this last chapter, and throughout the whole of the Second Book, he may seem not to have confined himself simply, to the line of tracing what the actual progress has been of Baptist principles, but, in addition, of showing what he esteems it logically ought to have been. But the careful reader will mark to what extent the Pedobaptist authorities alluded to, sustain him in this opinion, or in other words, concede the points at issue. Just where one writer fails to do this, others have more than supplied the deficiency. It must also be borne in mind that it would be impossible fully to show the importance of each concession, except by also exhibiting how little it left unacknowledged, and the narrow and untenable nature of the position to which the opponents of further progress or practical adhesion to Baptist views were reduced.

Let any one consider the concessions made during the past hundred years by such men as Campbell, Stuart, and Robinson, as to the meaning of *βαπτίζω*, or as to the effect of the prepositions and the circumstances and figures connected with the administration of Baptism. In the chapter

on the importance of that rite, the author has inserted more of his own ideas than elsewhere. But let any one consider the rapid success of Puseyism as an illustration of the importance of a correct observance of ordinances, by showing the results of erroneous views of them, and by the certainty of a fearful reaction from the neglect of the positive institutions of Christianity. Let him consider the concessions of Coleridge, Bushnell, Bunsen, and the "North British Review" as to what inconsistencies, and injurious effects *have* ever arisen out of infant baptism; and the testimonies that have been exhibited in various ways by all Christian denominations—that the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are committed to the visible churches as such, and he will see how little there is left which is now a matter of fair controversy at all.

BOOK III.

PRINCIPLES ALWAYS HELD IN COMMON.

In order now to perfect our view of the progress of Baptist principles during the last hundred years, we must mark the advance of a third class of opinions, namely, those which Baptists yet hold in common with other evangelical Christians, but which require the acknowledgment of Baptist principles to be advocated with force and consistency. Some of these are the Sufficiency of Holy Scripture as a rule of faith and practice; Salvation by grace alone; and the essential Priesthood of all Christians.

CHAPTER I.

THE SUFFICIENCY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE AS A RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE.

The Roman Catholic system has, perhaps, more clearly and abundantly claimed infallibility for the Church than for Scripture, but all who regard Christianity as a religion of Divine authority, admit that the Bible stands in an unique relation to man.

At the Reformation, therefore, one of the great points of discussion between the Catholics and Protestants, was the position which ought to be assigned to the sacred Scriptures. Luther, converted through their perusal, found them the source of his strength, and in his battles with Rome he and all his followers maintained their full sufficiency. "The foundation of articles of faith" said he, "is the word of God." The sixth article of the Church of England fairly embodies the general Protestant view in opposition to that of the Papists. "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein nor may be proved thereby is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." So important is this esteemed, that in every ordination of a Presbyter, and consecration of a bishop in that Church, the candidate is especially interrogated on this point, and has to promise conformity to this article in all his teachings. Just in proportion as Protestants have been brought into conflict with the Romish Church, this has been the ground on which alone they have planted themselves with success. It is the independent and original study of the sacred Records fostered by this great principle among the masses of the people, that has produced the superiority of Protestant nations in every point of view. All that the United States is at this moment, all the superiority of her people in morals and in enterprise over the Roman Catholic States of this continent, she owes to the reliance of her people on the Bible as the standard of their faith. This is the source and safeguard even of her liberties. It is this makes Massachusetts what she is; and the want of it that makes Mexico what she is. All the brightest glory of England

can be traced to this one source, the Bible taken as the rule of Faith and life. It has been the foundation of national virtue and greatness wherever it has gone, and a source of power such as nothing else in the whole history of mankind has produced.[1]

If now we look back a hundred years, we shall perceive that great progress has been made in the practical acknowledgment of this sufficiency and power of Scripture. Look for a moment particularly at the religious instruction of youth. One hundred years ago, and the chief means for accomplishing this were Catechisms and creeds committed to memory, in place of those fresh *living* views of truth drawn from the Word of God, in the Sabbath School and Bible class systems which now prevail. A very important branch of literature has sprung up, designed to render the study of the Bible popular and pleasant to children, and its histories and truths familiar.

When M. de Tocqueville visited the institutions of the country, a few years ago, he went, among other places, of a Sabbath morning, to one of the largest Sabbath Schools in the city of New York. Brought up in Roman Catholic or infidel France, he had never beheld such a sight before. Some hundreds of happy children all had *Bibles* in their hands. He had only seen them taught religion by Catechisms and forms of prayer. "What," he exclaimed, "do you let each of these young people read the Bible?" "Yes." "And do you found your whole system of instruc-

[1] Let any one who doubts the above, read the history of Pitcairn's Island, and see the effect of the Bible as a foundation of all the laws of old Adams, and of that authority which secured their obedience. He will never again question the amazing power of the Scriptures in a political point of view.

tion directly on the Bible?" "Yes." "And is this done in your Sabbath Schools generally throughout the country?" "Yes." "And do all the children attend?" "Very generally." "It must produce a profound impression upon the national character," was the reply of that sagacious philosopher.

But the Roman Catholics have naturally turned upon all Protestants, and appealed to infant baptism as an unfailing proof of the authority of tradition and of the Church, and of the *insufficiency* of Scripture. They have said again and again, "we have substituted sprinkling for immersion *by the authority of the Church.* What other authority can you show for this? Scripture is against you, and the very meaning of the word is against you. You baptize *infants*, where is your authority? This can not be proved from the Bible without the aid of tradition. We believe in it on the authority of the Church, but if you rely so much on the Bible alone you must give it up as unauthorized." Nor have Protestants generally been fairly able to meet this. And hence among them all there has been more or less of shrinking practically from the full sufficiency of Scripture, and a disposition to rely in part upon tradition.

In no denomination has this tendency manifested itself so strongly as in the Episcopal Church, both in England and in this country; and that chiefly in the form of Puseyism. In England it began among the clergy. They were anxious to make head against the growing popularity and evangelical power of the dissenters, by pretending to a degree of authority in matters of faith which the non-conformist ministers utterly disclaimed as grossly superstitious and idolatrous. To such a degree of approach to Romanism did this at length proceed, that in the celebrated Tract, No. 90, it is

boldly stated that "In the sense in which it is commonly understood at this day, Scripture, it is plain, is *not*, on Anglican principles, the rule of faith." "All difficulties in the interpretation of Scripture would be removed, or nearly so, would we but yield our private interpretations to the sense of the Church Catholic whenever that can be ascertained."[1]

But such doctrines could only be made to appear plausible by appealing to the common belief in infant baptism in proof of the doctrine of tradition. This is done over and over again. The language of Field is quoted and referred to in these Tracts to prove tradition by infant baptism, thus, "The fourth kind of tradition is the continued practice of such things as are *neither contained in the Scriptures expressly, nor the examples of such practice expressly there delivered*, though the grounds, reasons, and causes of the necessity of such practice be there contained; and the benefit or good that followeth of it. Of this sort is *the baptism of infants*, which is therefore named a tradition, because it is not expressly delivered in Scripture that the Apostles did baptize infants, nor an express precept there found that they should do so."[2] Bishop White and Montague are also cited as more unqualifiedly still speaking of infant baptism, as practiced upon tradition alone, and "of which it may be declared that Scripture *teacheth nothing*."[3] Directly the Puseyite is put to the proof, he retires back to infant baptism. It is perhaps *in* Scripture, he thinks, but certainly not *on* it. It can be wrought out by the aid of tradition, but it can not be proved from the Bible alone.

[1] Carry's Testimony of the Fathers to the thirty-nine Articles, Pref. p. 2.
[2] Tract No. 77, p. 429.
[3] Pages 431, 433, American edition.

The Presbyterian and Congregationalist may have professed to such men formerly that they could prove infant baptism from the Bible. But the "North British Review" now has openly given all this up, and directly Pedobaptists turn round to meet the Baptists, their main reliance is, and ever has been, certain scraps of the fathers and of Church history, half quoted and worse understood. Even these are now being abandoned; and *Church authority* and discretionary power are boldly appealed to as sufficient by Coleridge, Neander, Bunsen, etc. In a word infant baptism essentially rests upon, and proves to those who believe in it, the insufficiency of Holy Scripture as a rule of faith and practice, and the great authority if not the supremacy of tradition or the Church.

Let any one take up a defense of infant baptism, no matter by what denomination prepared, or on what ground it is based, and he will be astonished at the vast parade of "the Fathers." Except our Episcopalian brethren, none use much of this kind of argument on other occasions; hence the mistakes which many make when they try to employ it as to this rite. But the chief misfortune of it all lies in teaching the poor man that the Scriptures are not sufficient as a rule of faith. The practical result is that the real appeal in regard to this controversy is made to a very large, rare, and expensive class of writings, which few are familiar with, and which few could even read if they had them. Every time infant baptism is called in question, the mass of Pedobaptists have to go to their ministers for arguments. The Bible, they are forced to confess, seems to favor our views, but their minister tells them that something else is the true sense. And he in turn either has to become a Baptist, or else is obliged to set up in his own heart, without perhaps doing

so in set words, the authority of the Church as superior to that of the Bible, since he believes implicitly the apparent teaching of the one at the expense of believing the apparent teaching of the other. In this way a supreme reliance upon human authority, in matters of religion, becomes imperceptibly an established custom and habit. Infant baptism thus is made the entering-wedge of a principle which forms and molds the whole religious character, laying the most substantial basis for Romanism.

Far be it from us to wish to overthrow respect for the proper Scripture authority of each true Christian Church. But all submission of mind which leads men to receive on authority that which can not be ultimately substantiated by the reasons professed, must at some time give a severe shock to true faith. It will produce a skepticism in regard to all those subjects which are most easily received at first through confidence, in the judgment of others; and prevent the knowledge of the wise becoming useful to the masses, except just so far as they are able at once to follow out the processes of reasoning involved, with full confidence in their own judgments.

The Baptists have been distinguished for their close attachment to the Scriptures. They, and they alone, have never appealed to any thing else for proof of any portion of their faith and practice, as Christians. This has not been from any doubt as to the value and corroboration afforded by an impartial examination of Church history. One hundred and fifty years and more before Neander and the German scholars generally had arrived at the conclusions now becoming so universal as to infant baptism and the original polity of the Church, Baptists had arrived at these

same conclusions, published them to the world, and fully verified them by early Church history.

But it has been the *principle* involved which has made them rely on the Scriptures *alone*, as a sufficient appeal in all cases of controversy. The Bible and a Christian experience in the heart are the only weapons needed. All the rest has ever been regarded by them as Saul's armor. They have preferred the simpler sling and stone of David.

The simplicity of this principle has been favorable to their success. It is one capable of being wielded by a plowboy or tinker with immense effect, as the writings of the dreamer of Bedford Jail have shown. Its simplicity also has given those who adhere to it, courage, boldness, and strength to undertake the most difficult duties.

It is worthy of remark how this simple principle has practically given strength, within the last hundred years, to a comparatively small denomination, poor and for the most part uneducated, and caused them thus to produce the leaders in many of those enterprises which have most tended to spread the Word of God among the nations; enterprises which have even given to the age its chief religious characteristics.

The Missionary system now requires no very extraordinary amount of reliance in the Word of God, because faith is largely turned to sight. But it was a very different matter when the father of the modern English missionary movements, William Carey, sailed from the shores of England in 1793. This "consecrated cobbler," as Sydney Smith, with desecrated wit, facetiously termed him, was for years the laughing-stock of the Reviewers, and of the Churchmen, both high and low. For a long time he plied his awl for a living, with a Hebrew Bible and a map of the

world alternately spread out before him. That Bible he had taken for his rule of faith, and there he had read: "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession." He turned to his map of the world, blackened over all the parts yet lying in heathen darkness, and then his faith in the word of God, and that alone, assured him of a fact to which all around him were asleep, *i. e.*, that there must be a brighter day reserved for the Church, and that it was the duty of Christians to ask the Father in the name of the Son, and then to rise and take possession of those vast regions, in the authority of Christ their King. It was a case of the most simple unmixed faith in the promises and commands of Scripture alone; and against all human encouragement and prospect of success, it led him forth without fortune and without outfit for his voyage, or permission to land, or means of support. But he went down into the well, amid its darkness, damps, and vapors, guided by the bright safety-lamp of God's Word, and by it alone. The heads of his great missionary sermon showed the solitary principle which impelled him: "Expect great things from God; and, attempt great things for God."

It was this implicit reliance on the Bible alone in William Carey, that awoke Protestant nations to that modern missionary movement which is now beginning to reap the harvest of the world.

A swelling wave of this strong impulse soon spread across the broad Atlantic, and swept Judson and his companions to this great work, then all Congregationalists in sentiment, yet animated by the same spirit. But the feeling of allegiance to the New Testament caused Judson to become a Baptist also. In fact, faith in the sufficiency of

Scripture made him all he was, all he ever became. And thus began chiefly those great missionary enterprises of England and America which are now truly the most successful and astonishing in the world. They have raised the Sandwich Islands to the rank of a civilized people, and are fast scattering the seeds of life, liberty, and love among the heathen nations of the earth. In fact, the Word of God is at this moment exhibiting a power, through its missionary operations, as extraordinary in its political effects upon the world at large, as in the early centuries upon the Roman empire.

A few years ago an uncouth missionary was preaching in Canton, when a Chinese student applied to be taught the outlines of the Christian system, and finally for baptism. This latter was refused from a just fear that the Gospel had not a sufficient hold upon the young man's heart, but that young man took the same method of imparting Christian truth that he had seen practiced by the missionaries with whom he had resided, and through these Biblical instructions, imperfectly conveyed, spread around him a knowledge of Christian truth. At length the authorities, officers of the Tartar dynasty, interfered arbitrarily and cruelly, and the community of the ancient Chinese rose really in defense of *religious liberty*. Thus commenced the present insurrection, and that student was the acknowledged head of the existing movement. Whatever may be the political results, whatever the religious superstitions involved, whatever the motives in the hearts of the leaders, God only knows; but it is in the midst of such confused scenes that God is carrying the knowledge of the Bible and of Christ, to the hearts of the millions of Chinese by the lips of their own countrymen, as they never could have been conveyed in centuries

by foreign missionaries. Nor do the superstitions appear to be more numerous or important than might be naturally expected, or than early Church history shows to have attended the first rapid spread of the Gospel among the heathen nations, and even the Jews.

Three principles which characterize this movement, give it great hopefulness. It guarantees full religious liberty, it promotes the circulation of the Scriptures in large quantities, and it makes war upon the use of opium and all intoxicating liquors.

Just before the rise of the movement, so discouraging had matters appeared to the eyes of Christians in this country, that they had begun to despair of any large results in China. We were told that there were not so many converts as missionaries, after more than twenty years of labor; that they were a cold, hard, polished people, not with hearts like other men, but without any real religious character to work upon. Missionary boards were utterly discouraged until this news suddenly burst upon them. No man can yet foresee the results of this movement entirely; but some things have been demonstrated, namely, that the Chinese are not the cold, hard, atheistic people they used to be imagined. Now it seems that superstition is the chief fault. It may be that Christianity is to operate here primarily as the rod of iron dashing in pieces the potter's vessel. How often does it really seem to act on governments like the fabled island of loadstone, which first drew the vessels to it through their iron bolts, and then drew out all the bolts that held them together. So Christianity by absorbing and drawing to itself through its own holiness and attractiveness all the elements of good, is the occasion unquestionably of many a rotten system of govern-

ment and of iniquity, dissolving and dropping to pieces of its own weight, as the walls of Jericho fell flat before the ram's horns of Joshua and of the priests. The destructive energy of Christianity thus acting with the force of miracle, prepares the way for faith in its power as a reconstructive system. One thing is indeed certain, the New Testament as the rule of faith, has given to the modern missions of Protestantism, their energy and success, and all their superiority over those conducted by the Papists.

Wherever Roman Catholic missionaries have gone, they have first taken pains to establish the authority of *the Church*, just where we put that of the Bible. This has been the characteristic difference, and this has led to the different results. A few years ago, Dr. Wiseman treated with scorn the attempts of Protestant missionaries as perfect failures compared with those of Rome, seeing that we could only count up a very few thousands as the result of our last fifty years' labor and expenditures, while the Catholics could boast of millions. It was in vain we pointed out that for real power and knowledge and piety our thousands were worth more than their millions, that our humblest converts were in character better than their saints. They looked and cared alone for numbers, and all whom they could get, whether adults or children, if submitted to their sprinkling, they accounted converts. On the contrary, modern Protestant missions have been founded on the Word of God as the ule of faith and practice. Hence they have bestowed far nore labor on the work of translating the Scriptures, and this has seemed for years to retard their labors. Francis Xavier's zeal was splendid and brilliant in its way, like some sudden charge of cavalry, that seemed to carry all before it. He baptized thousands where our missionaries would hardly

have baptized one. He swept every thing before his face, but the enemy closed in overwhelming masses on his rear, as where cavalry are not supported by infantry, and the results of his labors were comparatively fruitless of permanent spiritual results.

William Carey hardly baptized a hundred at Serampore, where Xavier would have sprinkled a million, and such has been the contrast every where. But then as to the amount of good actually done on a broad scale, the results are to be estimated differently. The Jesuit missionaries, as a whole, have passed through many lands like the whirlwind through the desert. They seem to achieve sweeping success, but leave ruin and desolation in their track. They change the name of the heathen gods, but leave the people idolaters; baptize the images, and call them saints. But take away the Papal priests for a few years, and their converts relapse without any sensible change. They multiply churches as rapidly as travelers pitch their tents, because they have no foundation to dig. On the other hand, Baptists have dug deep, because building for eternity, and the foundation once laid on the Rock of Ages, and the underground work done, the superstructure is easily erected and lasts, because solid. If any one in this point of view compares Protestant missions generally, with Catholic, they will be astonished at the difference. The conversion of the natives has been delayed for the work of translation, baffled by disease, weakened by deaths, and yet more real progress has been made by Protestants for the overthrow of heathenism in Asia, in fifty years, than Roman Catholics have made in ages. And with us the work is only just beginning, while theirs is being brought to a close. Protestant missions in twenty years, have produced more sensible results

in the three hundred millions of China, than the Roman Catholic efforts in ten centuries.

The press occupies a very different position among Protestants from what it does among Papists, because when men have learned to read the Bible they have acquired the key of all knowledge and the desire to enter its opened door. The work of translation is infinitely more prominent in the one than in the other. This has caused our success. And if it be asked what has made this great difference in the two methods of operation, we must look for it in the type of labor first entered upon by the *pioneers* in this enterprise. We must look for the germ of it very greatly in the mission presses of Serampore.

William Carey and his associates had been accustomed to prove every thing by Scripture. Of strong sense but ignorant of philosophy, and of Church history, the Bible and experimental religion were their great resorts. William Carey could as soon have made shoes without a last, as a discourse without his Bible. Hence before the Baptists could fairly get to work they must translate the Bible. The herculean labors of this kind already performed by Protestant missions, within the last fifty years, probably exceed all that was done in eighteen hundred years before. Languages have been reduced to writing, grammars made, lexicons formed, the Bible translated, and nations been taught to read its pages of everlasting life.

Comparatively few, poor and ignorant as the Baptists were, when Carey started on his great mission, it could little have been expected that they should have been able at all to keep pace with other Protestants in the blessed rivalry of translating and giving the Word of God to the

heathen. And yet on examination it will be found that they have done far more than their natural proportion in this great work, even among Protestant missionaries who have all wrought nobly. Carey translated the Bible into one language, and Judson into another, and thus the work was begun by English and thus by American Christian missionaries.

If now from the work of translating the Scriptures we turn to that of *distributing* them, nobly have the Bible Societies of Europe and America all wrought. They have reduced the price of the Bible so that what the whole labor of a working man for a life time would hardly have procured him before printing was invented, may now be purchased for a quarter of a dollar, or the worth of his labor for an hour or two. *Forty millions* of Bibles and Testaments have been put into circulation since Bible Societies arose; while but *four* million had been published in the eighteen hundred years before. Protestants have spread the blessed book, not only over the civilized world, but among heathen nations, of one hundred and fifty different tongues, and dialects, with a profusion and success that must make the work of ministers at home and missionaries abroad quite different, and it is to be hoped far more successful, in future than heretofore.

But here again the mind that first conceived of the formation of a Bible Society was Rev. William Hughes, a Baptist. He formed the idea, drew up the circular that called it into existence, wrought out the plan, and for years watched over its success. Indeed it has been declared by an impartial and cotemporary authority, that "the Bible Society was almost entirely the result of his suggestions."[1]

[1] "London Christian Guardian," in his obituary notice.

Let no injustice be done to other denominations. They have had the honor of doing more, far more than Baptists have in spreading the Bible among all nations. They have had wealth, and numbers, and influence that we have not possessed. And many of them have manifested a zeal and liberality which could not have been excelled. But yet it may be questioned if it has been altogether by accident, or not in part by the force of *inherent principles* and owing to Baptists being, in fact, men of one Book, that they have furnished the pioneers to the extent which has been shown to those modern movements which form the hope of the age—Foreign Missions—Biblical translations and the circulation of the Bible without restriction and without comment.

These are *the great* religious enterprises of the times, giving to the present age its deepest interest and to the future its brightest hopes. All certainly are developments of that great principle, *the power and sufficiency of Scripture.*

Nor is this principle worn out, waxing old, and ready to vanish away as many suppose who are inveighing against the "Bibliolatry" of the present age. It has done much, but it has got to do still more. The religion of Jesus Christ as a system of doctrines and practice, is threatened now as never before, by Roman Catholicism on the one hand, and German Rationalism on the other. Both of these profess a sort of Christianity and offer it the tribute of a professed veneration. So that now the great question is, how are we to determine and to prove what is true Christian faith? Where are we to draw the line between it and superstition, as between it and infidelity. A line must be drawn somewhere; and in all simplicity we plead that it should be drawn just here. That system of religion

which Christ and His Apostles taught, and which is, therefore, recorded in the New Testament, *that and nothing else is pure Christianity.*

And Christianity not only as a system of doctrines, but also of *ecclesiastical relations*, must be defined in the same manner. Within the last few years much has been said and written about "the Church." The German boasts of this as an age of historico-philosophical reconstruction which is to erect what he calls the Christian Church embodying all the developments and cutting off all the abuses of the past eighteen hundred years. He claims a right to alter in the name of sentiment, beauty, and expediency. Even Bunsen wishes, as we see, to "reform the doctrines of the Bible." The Roman Catholic professes an inherent right in the Church by virtue of a supposed indwelling Divine authority resting in the successors of St. Peter, to do the same. The Anglican party in the Episcopal Church, makes the same claim in behalf of the Three Orders of that denomination. But all of these have overlooked the broader, deeper question which concerns not Church government but Church *existence.* Not who are the proper *officers*, but who are the proper *members.* The Church is the *assembly* not the rulers, the people not the Priests. The government of a country or of a society is one thing, the citizenship quite another. France changed her government thirteen times in fifty years, but the French nation never ceased to exist. There is something infinitely more vital to a Church than how many orders shall compose its officers, *i. e., what constitutes the terms of membership?* This question can not be determined, hardly discussed until the New Testament is respected as *the only constitutional Text-Book* of the Christian Church, instead of being

ignored as it is practically by all these systems, modern and antiquated, that of Chevalier Bunsen no less than that of Cardinal Wiseman, and all in between.

CHAPTER II.

SALVATION BY GRACE ALONE.

In all ages men have built their hopes of salvation either upon their own good works, or upon the grace of God; or upon some admixture of the two. The doctrine of St. Paul unquestionably is, that we are justified by faith alone, and not by the deeds of the law. That our salvation is "not of works, lest any man should boast;" but that it is by grace alone we are saved. Justification being a gratuitous thing, and good works the necessary results of a living faith; the effects, therefore, and not in any degree the meritorious cause of our salvation.

This was the principle which Luther uttered, and insisted upon with so much energy, as the mark of a standing or of a falling Church; it was the leading principle of the Reformation.

Centuries before, indeed, Augustine had boldly preached it, from his own experience; but it had become completely overshadowed by the ceremonies of the Church and the doctrines of human merit. All the Reformed Churches, in proportion to the life of their piety, placed this as the corner-stone of true Christianity.

The Church of England declares, in her eleventh Article,

"that we are justified by faith *only*, is a most wholesome doctrine;" and in the twelfth Article, that "good works, as the *fruits* of faith, *follow after* justification," "as a tree is discerned by its fruits," but "can not put away our sins;" while, in the thirteenth Article, it further urges that "works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his Spirit are not pleasant to God; forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace." And yet again in the fourteenth Article, that "works of supererogation can not be taught without arrogancy and impiety."

This was the doctrine prevalent in England, Scotland, and throughout the Continent, among the Reformed Churches, down to the period of the English Commonwealth. Doubtless many a courtly priest of Elizabeth and Charles I. believed in High Church doctrines of an opposing character, but these had to be taught in such covered up and ambiguous language that those who held them were tolerated only because their sentiments were not discerned through the drapery of language in which they were enveloped.

From the restoration of Charles II., however, this great doctrine, though not openly denied, was gradually thrown into the shade. In England this neglect might have been from its supposed connection with Puritanism. But in Scotland it was the same, and so on the Continent of Europe. Even the Congregational churches of New England felt its influence. A more general cause, therefore, must be looked for, and this is to be found alone in *the unconverted membership introduced into all these churches by infant baptism.*

About one hundred years ago, nothing can be conceived

of, more dead than the religious condition of the Church of England. Cowper, the poet of the evangelical faith, was yet a law-student, and Montgomery was not yet born. Romaine and a few others preached the doctrine, we are considering, in the Established Church, and were grossly lampooned by Hogarth for doing so. Wesley and Whitefield suffered every obloquy and insult for declaring it. In New England, Edwards was dismissed from his pastoral charge for upholding it, and the Tennents, who maintained it, gathered round them a small and despised minority in the Presbyterian Church. The general revivals of religion which took place, however, under the preaching of such men as we have named, soon produced a very different state of things, especially in this country. Large numbers seceded and joined the Baptists, and this among other causes perhaps rendered the clergy of other denominations more open in their adoption of these sentiments. In England, the bulk of the Dissenters were men who held these truths; and they were encouraged by the rise of the Methodists, no less than by the boldness and extemporaneous eloquence of the evangelical party in the Church of England. Thus the doctrine in question became exceedingly popular with the masses of all denominations, until the check given to it, in certain quarters, by the advance of Puseyism within about twenty years.

In Scotland, Chalmers and men of his stamp became every where popular. In Geneva the flame of evangelical religion was lighted up through the labors of a Haldane; and in the United States, during the past fifty years, the membership of the evangelical Churches adhering to this faith, has multiplied from about four hundred thousand to three millions and a half, being an increase of

eightfold, while our population has expanded only fourfold.

The point to be considered just now is, whether infant baptism is or is not friendly and consistent with the spread of this great doctrine, to which all evangelical Protestants have professedly subscribed. A moment's consideration will show that it stands in utter contradiction to justification by faith alone.

Infant baptism has generally been held to involve a saving change from a state of darkness into one of grace, thus putting an act of man in place of the free gift of God. In the Church of Rome this is, and has been ever, the doctrine avowed, and in the Church of England, since the Reformation, her formularies have retained the same language, though in contradiction to the spirit of her articles. Even the final decision in the celebrated case of Rev. Mr. Gorham, *vs.* the Bishop of Exeter, within a year or two, admits that such is the teaching of the Church of England formularies, only maintaining that it was not so essential a part of the system as to justify the silencing of a minister of Low-Church views. We know that the evangelical ministers of that denomination have been better than their forms, but what else can common people understand beside baptismal regeneration from such language as that in which God is solemnly besought "for this infant that he, *coming to thy holy baptism*, may receive remission of sin by spiritual regeneration. Receive him, O Lord as Thou hast promised." Just before the baptism, it is prayed, "sanctify *this water* to the mystical washing away of sin." And immediately after baptism it is officially declared, "seeing how, dearly beloved, that this child *is regenerate*," etc., while the Divine Being is solemnly addressed in language such as this,

"We yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant with Thine Holy Spirit; to receive him for Thine own child, by adoption, and to incorporate him into Thy holy Church."

A spiritual change and a change of state are here declared to have taken place, and sacramental works are put as the channel through which the grace is asserted to have flowed, in circumstances, too, where the party supposed to be justified *can not* even have manifested faith. What can more directly cut at the root of justification by faith alone without works? So clear, uniform, and certainly affecting the eternal condition is this change supposed to be, by the Church of England, that in case a child die at any time after the performance of this ceremony it may be buried in consecrated ground. But if not thus sprinkled it has no such right, and in 1854 a bishop refused to consecrate one portion of a public burial-ground for the members of the Church of England unless a substantial *wall* should separate their dead from those of the Dissenters.

It may be said that all who have practiced infant baptism have not believed it to produce a saving change like this. True, but essentially infant baptism teaches that it in some way alters the spiritual condition of the child, that it makes the child dying in infancy "more safe." Whatever good it effects is not of grace, but of works; works going before justification, and not the fruits of faith. To get rid of this, some of the New England divines have taken the ground that the children of parents who are in the Church are embraced in the covenant *by birth* and *therefore* baptized, thus not admitting that baptism brings them into it. But in that case the baptism of their parents would be as sufficient as

their faith. Unquestionably the New England divines have had all sorts of theories, earnestly desiring to make infant baptism less contradictory to the whole evangelical system than it naturally appears. This Dr. Bushnell has shown while himself endeavoring to establish yet another view. Certain it is that in New England, in spite of all its ingenious theories, infant baptism, through the half covenant system, had well-nigh subverted the whole evangelical faith, especially around Boston.

Dr. Ide[1] says, "A Pedobaptist historian very candidly informs us that, at the beginning of the present century all the Congregational Churches in Boston, with a single exception, had renounced the faith of the Puritans. The Old South still stood upon the platform of the Fathers, though her pastor was a semi-Arian. But when the enemy came in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him. In the year 1803 the Baptist Churches in the city were visited with a precious revival, in which the Old South shared to some extent. A few of the members of this Church occasionally worshiping with the Baptists became revived and established a prayer-meeting among themselves, from which a renovating movement commenced that has been the origin of all the orthodox Congregational Churches with which the city of the Pilgrims is now blessed. Thus when infant baptism had put out the fire on all its own altars, with the exception of one solitary shrine, and had caused it even there to burn dim and low, the flame was kindled again from altars which this unscriptural rite had never been suffered to profane. And while amid the Egyptian darkness that settled over the Pedobaptists in

[1] See his edition of Infant Baptism Part and Pillar of Popery, pp. 95–98.

Boston, the Baptists in their Goshen, at the North End, thus walked in unclouded light, and showed themselves valiant for the truth; so throughout the land, feeble and scattered as they were, they stood firm by the cause of their Master. Though thousands around were casting off the authority of Jesus, not a man of them wavered in his allegiance. From all their places of worship the ensign of the cross streamed out undepressed and untarnished, and from all their pulpits the Godhead of Christ and the sovereign efficacy of His blood were distinctly and earnestly proclaimed.

"To the memory of these brave hearted men justice may never be done in this world, but we doubt not, in the great day of decision, when all events and instrumentalities shall be placed in their true light, it will appear that to the Baptists of Massachusetts belongs the honor of having been the first to arrest the overflowing scourge, that they were the Abdiels who remained faithful in the midst of revolted multitudes, that it was they who, when all seemed lost, threw themselves single-handed into the van of the battle and held the field against fearful odds, until behind their scattering front the broken ranks of orthodoxy were formed anew. Peace to the ashes of these Christian heroes."

CHAPTER III.

THE ESSENTIAL PRIESTHOOD OF ALL TRUE CHRISTIANS.

Two of the most deservedly popular writers of Ecclesiastical history in the present day, Neander and Merle D'Aubigné, consider "*the essential priesthood of all true Christians*" as one of the most important and original features presented in the history of the Christian Church. In his "History of the Reformation" the latter of these says, "At the beginning the Church was a society of brethren. * * * All Christians were *priests* of the living God with humble pastors for their guidance. * * * But in popery the holy and primitive equality of souls before God is lost sight of, Christians are divided into two strangely unequal camps, on the one side, a separate class of priests, on the other, timid flocks reduced to blind submission." Indeed he declares that one of the two most important features in which Christianity differed from all the human systems which fell before it was, that "whereas the priests of Paganism were almost the gods of the people, Jesus Christ dethroned those living idols, abolished this proud hierarchy—took from man what man had taken from God, and re-established the soul in direct communication with the Divine fountain of truth, proclaiming himself the only Master and Mediator. One is your Master, even Christ, and ye are all brethren."

Neander traces out the departure from this principle as one of the first great corruptions—"*revolutionizing*," in fact, the Christian Church.[1] He speaks of "the formation

[1] Torrey, vol. i. 193–200.

of a sacerdotal caste in the Christian Church" as "an idea alien to the Christian principle—an idea which could not fail to bring about a revolution of views, destined to last for ages, and even to unfold itself in a wider circle from the germ which had once been implanted." "The great principle of the New Testament, the universal *priestly* character, grounded in that common and immediate relation of all to Christ as the source of the divine life was repressed, the idea interposing itself of a particular mediatory priesthood attached to a distinct order."

After this "Although the idea of the (universal) priesthood, in the purely evangelical sense, grew continually more obscure and was thrust further into the background, in proportion as that unevangelical point of view became more and more predominant, yet it was too deeply rooted in the very essence of Christianity to be totally suppressed." "When the idea of this universal priesthood retired into the background, that of the priestly consecration which all Christians should make of their entire life *went along with it.*"

Chevalier Bunsen, in his recent work on "Hippolytus and his Times," insists with great strenuousness on the same truths and their vital importance.

But a higher authority among Christians than Neander or than Bunsen addressed himself to the members generally of the first Churches of Christ, and said, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an *holy priesthood* to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."[1]

All true Christians, then, are by nature and inheritance, *priests*, and as such it is their highest privilege and imper-

[1] 1 Peter, ii. 5, 9.

ative duty to pray for and teach all mankind the knowledge of the true God.

That which in this country forms the basis of all our liberties, is the acknowledged fact of the sovereignty residing in the people, and not in the rulers. So, that which constitutes the liberty and excellency of true Christianity as opposed to false, is the essential priesthood of all true Christians. In heaven the souls of the blessed continually do praise the Redeemer, not only that He hath redeemed them to God by his blood, but hath made them kings and *priests* to "God and to the Lamb."

We have not in this lost sight of the Christian ministry as a distinct and divinely constituted order. The political fact that the sovereignty is in the people, does not obviate the necessity of executive officers, such as a president and magistrates. Neither, then, does the universal priesthood of the Church do away with distinct ministries and pastorships. But there is much work in the Church which never can be adequately performed by ministers alone, or while all other Christians forget that they, too, have sacrifices to offer and duties to accomplish.

This whole subject has not unfrequently been stated in missionary and other discourses, thus: "The evangelization of the world belongs to all churches and to all Christians as such, but all are not able to go out personally to preach Christ, and these must do their part by contributing to the support of those who do go." But such a representation even as this falls utterly short of the great truth stated by St. Peter. It makes a loop-hole for laziness in the great commission itself. For many a man might easily afford to give his hundreds or his thousands, if he could thus buy himself off from the duty of personal labors and

services for the cause of Christ. While the Christian, however, as a priest, has got to present the sacrifices and the thank offerings of his gold and his silver upon the altar of God, he has far *more* than this all to do. He has first of all to present *himself a living sacrifice.* His time, his talents, his personal labors, and instructions, must all be fully consecrated to the service of his Master.

The greatest difficulty is not to find men who are willing to contribute for the support of all church and missionary expenses cheerfully. There are thousands who will pay a minister liberally to pray for them and preach to them, and to the whole world besides, if they may but sit still in spiritual idleness or follow their wonted pursuits from Monday morning to Saturday night, unmolested by the claims of religion and by the duties of this universal priesthood. We would not disparage the moralities and amiabilities manifested by such persons; and it is, perhaps, a hopeful sign to see their places filled in the sanctuary on the Sabbath. But we can not help asking whether those who are in Scripture addressed as "a holy priesthood," have not got some spiritual sacrifices to offer up themselves, whether it is not their duty to instruct their children at home in the ways of piety, and to pray in their families, and in the prayer-meetings, and to take part in the Sabbath-school and Bible-classes. It is as truly their prerogative to labor directly for the conversion of souls to God as it is of those who preach.

This has been the great point at issue between true and formal religion in all ages. That professed Christian who does not labor personally, and pray earnestly, for the conversion of mankind, not only lowers down the tone of the whole of God's eternal priesthood by an injurious example,

but injures his own soul inconceivably by the lack of these spiritual exercises. One can no more maintain the comforts of piety in his own soul without an active and aggressive piety than a man can enjoy health without exertion. And it is for this cause that so many are weak and sickly among us, and so many sleep. Exercise on the one hand, or disease on the other, are as much laws of the spiritual as of the physical world. Except a man deny himself, says the Saviour, and take up his cross daily, he can not be my disciple—and if not a disciple, not a priest.

Indeed, the Christian, all the time he is on earth, is, in this respect, like one recovering from a long and dangerous disease, the exercise that refreshed him yesterday, and increased his health, will be too little for him to-morrow, and he must go on increasing his labors as he increases strength, under the penalty of a relapse. Yea, there is a joyousness about the *increasing* exertions of pious labor like that of one whose strength is daily augmenting. No man who is not laboring earnestly, and laboring *directly*, as a spiritual priest will enjoy the spiritual health and privileges, which are his birthright.

We may call ourselves Protestants, or by any other name we please, but the restrictions of the priesthood to the ministry is the essential error of Popery. That system makes the minister the only priest—the only one to offer up the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, keeping back the people from doing any thing. And just as the old absolutists of Europe have placed that sovereignty in one man, that rightly belongs to the whole people, so it has devolved that *priesthood* upon the minister alone, which properly belongs to the whole Church of Jesus Christ. The welfare of all Christian Churches depends upon

all the professors of religion, not devolving it upon saints, or priests, or ministers, to pray for them, but themselves praying and laboring all for the conversion of a world to Christ. Here lies the great strength of true Christian Churches: not in the labors of the ministry alone, but of all the people. This multiplies power a thousandfold.

One hundred years ago, if we mistake not, the laity were singularly inactive in most Protestant denominations. In England, from the death of Oliver Cromwell to the rise of Wesley, the people in almost all denominations seem to have been paralyzed. In the State Church of that country this was especially the case. Hardly one active religious layman in any department of Christian enterprise appears in her history, and very few among the Nonconformists, while meetings for prayer and religious conference appear to have dwindled strangely.

In New England, matters were in the same state. Lay preaching seemed confined, through the country, to the Baptists, and in England, to them, the Methodists, and perhaps a few Independents.

The most general and nearest approach to the recognition of the principle we are illustrating has, in various ages, been the congregational singing of the praises of God in public worship. The importance of this is but little appreciated commonly, even in the present day. Through it originally the Jewish synagogue made its most powerful attacks upon Paganism. Proud Roman women of the highest rank, drawn by the majesty of those hymns there sung to the great Jehovah, were drawn in crowds from heathen temples to poor little synagogues in the outskirts of Rome and other cities. Thus were the foundations of Paganism shaken among the nations, preparatory to the bringing in of a new

dispensation. But Christianity carried this part of worship to a far higher degree of perfection than Judaism had done, for with Christians the universal priesthood led each to emulate the other in swelling the mighty praises of the Triune God, and joining with all their voices even where they had choirs to lead. Hence it is observable that in the letter of Pliny to Trajan, describing their worship at the beginning of the second century, he speaks of them as a body of people accustomed to meet on a particular day, and "sing praises to Christ as to God," while he says nothing of their preaching.

Augustine speaks with great piety and self-inspection in regard to the effects of this part of Divine worship on his own soul.

"When I remember the tears I shed at the Psalmody of Thy Church, in the beginning of my recovered faith, and how at this time I am moved not with the singing, but with the things sung, when they are sung with a clear voice and modulation most suitable, I acknowledge the great use of this institution. Thus I fluctuate between peril of pleasure and approved wholesomeness, inclined the rather (though not as pronouncing an irrevocable opinion) to approve of the ways of singing in the Church, that so by the delight of the ears the weaker minds may rise to the feeling of devotion."[1]

In the present day, whatever means best promote the singing of the whole congregation should be used; but let each Christian be assured that his heart swelling, and his voice joining in the sweet harmonies and choruses of the house of God, is a more acceptable sacrifice to his Maker than the smoke of incense and of burnt-offering. It gives

[1] Confessions, lib. 10 : 49.

forth the solemn testimony of *the whole Christian people* to the truths that are uttered from the desk; preaches them over again with such a voice and testimony to the unconverted as will be found among the most powerful and elevated methods by which the Church fulfills its universal priesthood.

No small portion of this priesthood of the people is performed through those Boards, Trusteeships, Societies, Committees, and agencies of voluntary Societies to effect ecclesiastical objects, to which the pious benevolence of the present age has given rise. These were almost unknown a century ago. Now the good which is being effected through their means is incalculable. And it is in proportion as these operations become well known to the body of the Christian people that they elicit the prayers, exertions, and contributions of the whole. Let the Christian layman, who is called to labor in the fulfillment of many a thankless Committee service, remember that in so doing he is helping to fulfill the duties of the priesthood at home, as really, and perhaps quite as effectually, as the missionary abroad. Let him not begrudge the time which these duties involve, but cheerfully and prayerfully discharge them, as engagements to which he is called by the great Head of the Church. Christians at home hold the rope, while missionaries go down into the wells and caverns below, to explore the darkness of a lost world. How many ministers suffer in their health most seriously, and have to neglect their own more immediate duties, because men of piety and intelligence, from the ranks of the business part of the community, are not to be found willing and reliable in the performance of these labors. The knowledge of the world possessed by an intelligent and active lawyer or business man, would, in many cases, be far more valuable than any other

experience in the management of that heavenly treasure, the merchandise of which is better than the merchandise of silver or of gold.

More directly still, the Sabbath-school, Bible-class, and Colporteur systems, which have grown to such importance within the last century, exhibit in many ways the power and utilities of the universal priesthood of the whole Christian Church. For they all rest broadly and immediately upon the people, being almost entirely plans of lay instruction, or rather systems which make each Christian a priest, to offer up spiritual sacrifices. These are developments the most interesting, the most powerful, and the most economical, of any of the great movements of our age, producing greater efforts for good upon the national mind, and upon the great heart of the rising generation throughout the world.

In the Sabbath-school we find a system that is self-sustaining. It requires little or no money. Wherever there is a Church, and often where there is none, some individuals possess more piety, knowledge, and aptitude to teach than others. Some are old and have experience, others are young and need instruction. The Sabbath-school rests upon and illustrates this great principle, that it is the duty of all those who know more freely to impart to those who know less. The very effort to teach, the preparation, the study of the Scripture, and prayer, will do any Christian more good than listening to a hundred sermons.

Probably, however, the prayer and conference meetings exhibit most simply and directly the universal priesthood of the Churches of Christ. For the power of these meetings consists in bringing together the testimony of so *many* witnesses to the truth as it is in Jesus; and through

the prayers they offer, the exhortations of men in all the various and different walks of life, the melodies in which they unite—all who attend are surrounded, as it were, on every side with an atmosphere of piety and holiness.

For an instance of still other kinds of useful priestly labors, let any one turn to the life of Harlan Page or of Howard. It is through duties such as all of these, not by pastors alone, but by all the people, that the Church of Christ puts on her beautiful garments, shakes herself from the dust and sloth of centuries, and comes forth arrayed in all the beauty of the priestly robes conferred by Christ.

In nature, the elements, when most silent, are most potential; and in grace these quiet, ever-working, wide-spread influences are the great hope of evangelical religion for ages yet in the future. It has not been by set sermons against Popery that Roman Catholics have been converted in this country, and yet by personal Christian influence and superior weight of character more than two millions have been drawn from this soul-destroying system, in the United States, within the last half-century, and the deadliest wound been inflicted on the head of the beast, that Antichrist has received since the Reformation. This spirit, however variously manifested, is in reality one. *It is the power of the priesthood residing in every member of the whole Church.* As it is cherished or neglected, every other gift and grace fluctuates.

But, without fear of contradiction, the Baptists may claim that their principles recognize this power beyond any other Christian denomination.

There are three of their essential and characteristic features which eminently lead to this result. First, *The simplicity of their form of church government*, in which there

is nothing done that is not subject to the will of the whole Church. Neither the vote of a non-professing or unconverted laity, nor the single voice of a dictatorial bishop can lord it over God's heritage, or fetter the priesthood and the peer-age (*i. e.*, the equality) of all the true sons of God, in their Father's house. The pastor is the presiding officer, but not the priest, of the Christian Church. He can not overrule its voice which is now, with the Baptists, as anciently with all, supreme. Nor can one Church overrule another, for each is independent. They consult and counsel as brethren, but can not command or dictate. Now, as we have shown before, no other denomination in this country can, upon the scale of a hundred years, claim the whole of this as true of them.

Secondly, This would, however, be impossible or disastrous if it were not for *the spiritual character of the membership of Baptist Churches.* If the members were received by birthright as the Quakers are, or by infant baptism upon the hope and presumption that they would grow up Christians—if upon any other basis than that of a credible experience of a work of grace sanctifying their hearts such as that upon which alone baptism is properly administered, the membership could not be trusted with such powers. The holy priesthood being mixed up with worldly masses would not be discernable nor capable of acting with efficiency. Hence just in proportion as other denominations have nullified their infant baptism and become more spiritual in their membership, just in proportion as they have come round to what Dr. Bushnell rightly terms "the Baptist theory of Church membership" have they also claimed and exercised the powers of this universal priesthood.

Third, Again Baptists test all their religion by *the ob-*

vious meaning of the New Testament, vitalized only by a personal experience of its divine truths, just as the blood carries life into every part vitalized only by the oxygen gas we inhale. This simplicity gives them great advantage in point of efficiency and power. Engrossed as most persons are in other pursuits, and without theological education, any complicated system reliant on studies beyond their research must make them dependent upon authorities and teachers, preventing the full measure of that boldness and confidence so essential to success, but which the clear and conscientious obedience to all known truth ever inspires. This gives simplicity of plan and unity of result in all essential principles, with the largest liberty and variety of methods in meeting complicated and various details. In exact proportion as Christian denominations walk by these rules, will be their comprehensiveness and their usefulness, their orthodoxy at heart and the catholicity of their charity.

CHAPTER IV.

BAPTIST PRINCIPLES FAVORABLE TO POLITICAL LIBERTY.

Before closing this work it will be appropriate to trace the progress during the past century of Baptist Principles n connection with those of Free Government.

Dr. Arnold well remarked that after forty, no wise man was so anxious for the people to acquire more liberty as to be fitted for more. In proportion as there is preparedness for freedom, liberty will soon follow inevitably, and where that is absent it can not last if acquired. Hence the natural

and necessary connection between true religion and civil liberty. It and it alone prepares man for freedom. "If the Son shall make you free," said the Saviour, "ye shall be free indeed." And so far free government must rest essentially upon a religious basis. Freedom without Government is anarchy, as mere government without freedom is tyranny. But in pure religion we find perfect freedom consisting with perfect government, the internal nature of man harmonized with his external relations. Here, therefore, is the type of all free government among men. And hence there is no truth so well illustrated by all history, especially modern history, as this, that every successful struggle for religious freedom has been followed either by a corresponding political struggle, or else by a large conceded increase of civil liberty.

We are at times liable to look upon the Church of Christ as a merely spiritual institution, one so exclusively intended to promote man's eternal interests that we lose sight of its importance to his temporal welfare. Each nation has ever founded its hopes on some peculiar excellence belonging to its institutions. But for permanence no principle of coherence has been found at all comparable to that of true religion. Some nations have prided themselves upon *physical power* for success, but time demonstrates that alone is not enough to preserve it from decay. Others have relied on intellectual greatness only. Voltaire announced this to the world as the sum of his philosophy. "Error and ignorance are the sole causes of the misfortunes of the human race." The French Revolution was wrought out on the idea that nothing but knowledge was requisite to make man free and happy. But intellectual cultivation was there proved as it has been by the history of the whole world, to be but too

consistent with moral depravation; and thus the spread of knowledge became but the diffusion of corruption. Enough this to show that knowledge alone, or even when united with the highest bravery and skill in arms, is not enough to preserve a nation's prosperity. Bacon says, "in the infancy of a State arms prevail, in its maturity arms and arts for a short season, in its decline commerce and the mechanic arts."

One source of national strength alone remains to be noticed. It is *moral and religious power*. The history of the Jews with their theocratic government was an illustration of this. The motto of their power was "righteousness exalteth a nation." Though a small people, though naturally narrow-minded, though not warlike in disposition and policy after arriving in Palestine, they flourished in proportion as they adhered to the principle on which their strength was founded, and only perished when they had utterly lost all true religion, and turned their backs on faith in the pursuit of ritualism.

In the institutions of this country, all of the three elements named, physical, mental, and moral power have been in a singular manner united and balanced by being left free. The hardy exercise of clearing the forests has increased the average stature of the men more than an inch above that of the parent stock. The exertions necessary to subdue the Indians and wild beasts, have given them courage in the use of arms, and ready habits of warfare. Free schools, colleges, and newspapers, have carried forward the intellect of the masses proportionably.

Now, in accounting for the prosperity of this country, some will select the strength and courage of the people, the extensive forests and fields for them to spread them-

selves in, and attribute to that source all its success. Others will select the spread of knowledge and newspapers, and attribute every thing to that. We fear, then, that in the midst of all this, one, and the chief element of the prosperity of this country, is in danger of being overlooked, *i. e.*, the moral and religious principles of its forefathers.

That sentiment which David put into the mouth of Israel three thousand years ago, needs often to be repeated—"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will trust in the name of our God." It may be well to show *the power of pure Christianity in raising a nation to greatness, and securing its happiness.*

Of all the mischievous alliances that man ever conceived, the union of Church and State has been the most prolific of ill consequences to both. There is, however, no error but some truth lies at the bottom of it, and while the union of the Church to the State is a sad error, the adherence of a nation to great religious principles is the principal source of its strength.

National governments have generally undertaken to rule men just in the reverse way from the Church, and miserable work have they made of it. They have governed mainly by force, by armies, by police, and by stringent laws, until society in the old world writhes in its agony, and is all ready to drop to pieces.

The Church of Christ undertakes to govern man by love, by conscience, by exhibiting what is right and true, by conferring its privileges only on the good—and it flourishes and increases. Napoleon, speaking of the kingdom of Christ, said, "We rest the creations of our genius upon force, Jesus Christ alone founded his empire upon love, and at this moment millions of men would die for him."

There is not a Christian but must have felt the strange contrast which there is between the kingdom of Christ and most other kingdoms that have yet seen the light of the sun. Its objects seem so different, and its methods so different, while yet it accomplishes all the great ends, even the earthly ends of government better than any other institution. It does more to assist men and put within their reach the best means of promoting their happiness, prosperity, and protection.

Go into some neighborhood where vice most prevails, and social order is least preserved, where all that makes a community virtuous, industrious, and happy, is set the most completely at defiance. Go with laws, with constables, with magistrates, and soldiers, and can you rectify the disorders of that community as you can by planting a Church of Christ, opening the doors of a house of worship, training the young in Sabbath-schools, and exhorting the old to reformation and penitence? Gather the community together to adore their Creator and repent of their sins, form the Christians into a holy brotherhood, and it will soon appear that there is no power on earth equal to it. And yet it is a power of which the nations of mankind have very little real conception.

If ever there was a time when it was palpable to all mankind that there is something radically wrong and rotten at the root of most of the old systems of government, this is the time. Like a row of dominoes which children set on end, and make one fall against another till the whole drop, so are most of the kingdoms of Europe and Asia tottering, jostling, and crashing against each other at this time. From the only unagitated spot, one may say, in the civilized world, we in this country calmly survey this state of things without

cause of alarm, if we can but adhere only to the principles on which the nation was constituted.

Now, it can easily be shown that it is religion—the religion of Christ that has given to this country the germ of her present happiness and institutions, making her political importance what it is. What was New England originally but a live coal shot out from the volcano of the Reformation? It was the living embodiment of principles struck out in the heat and fires of those tremendous throes of religious opinion which agitated England from Henry VIII. to Charles II. Rights of conscience which seemed visionary and impracticable in the Old World were here tested and proved not impracticable for the New. The basis of the modern civil liberties of this country (and of Europe) may all be traced back to speculations upon religious liberty and the rights of conscience. The Declaration of Independence was but the public announcement of a thing, the germ of which had existed long before. The American principles of self-government in the State originated in self-government in the Church. The idea of choosing officers and settling every thing peaceably by the vote of the majority, was evidently derived, in this country, from the custom of thus electing Church officers, and of thus arranging all religious matters, in Holland. The Church without a prelate went before the State without a king. The germ and basis of those political institutions which here have produced so much happiness may be found in the Church and town meetings of the New England colonies long enough prior to the Revolution.

In fact, the history of self-government in America may be traced back to its origin, in 1620, when the voyagers of the May Flower on landing, finding themselves out of the colony of Virginia, signed a paper, mutually promising to

submit to all such "just and equal laws and ordinances" as should from time to time be thought most convenient for the common good.[1]

What alone were wanting in Massachusetts—full religious liberty, safe guarantees for the rights of the minority against the tyranny of the majority, and separation of Church and State, were supplied by Roger Williams, drawing his idea of a Church from the New Testament alone. It was the *reserved* rights of each, first completely conceived and struggled for in this country by Roger Williams, that became the foundation of the perfect civil liberties and individual rights secured to each in this land.

In 1638, a solemn covenant was, in like manner, signed by Roger Williams and his associates to submit to the orders of "the major part," but "in civil things *only*."[2] The Charter from King Charles, which he afterward secured, was obtained chiefly to protect themselves from the encroachments of Massachusetts.

We have only to read the Acts of the Apostles, and see the model of this Republic of Independent States in those spiritual communities scattered here and there over Palestine, and extending through Asia Minor and Egypt, until they filled the whole Roman empire. Those Churches so dependent upon Christ, yet so independent of the whole world beside, peaceably choosing their own officers, and managing their own affairs, counseling like brothers, and fraternizing without interfering with each other's independence and reserved rights; those Churches of Christ and his Apostles gave to the world the idea of that new kind of civil government which now stands in such a happy contrast to the moldering thrones of the Old World.

[1] Hildreth, vol. i. p. 159. [2] Hildreth, vol. i. p. 256.

The right of the majority to govern, was in New England, taught the State by all the Congregational Churches in common. But the *reserved rights* of the minority on all matters about which there could be conscientious scruples were first declared to this Continent by the Baptist colony of Rhode Island. As a singular illustration of the whole of this, it should not be forgotten that the Charter, drawn up on principles suggested by Roger Wil liams, survived the Revolution of 1776, and remained the Constitution of that State until within a very recent period. There is no other civilized government on the face of the earth that changed so little in its constitution in those two hundred years, while yet altering so largely and so prosperously in all outward circumstances.

If from the intellectual origin we turn now to the practical development of liberty, it was in Virginia that the resolutions of 1765, against the Stamp Act, carried through by Patrick Henry, brought to a crisis the great struggle for liberty. And it is the history of liberal views, in the most originally aristocratic of the colonies, which will best illustrate the bearing of religious opinions on the civil constitution of a people.

In 1745 a company of New England Baptists settled in Virginia, from whose extraordinary zeal nearly the whole of the Baptists of the South and South-west, now numbering more than half a million of communicants, have since sprung. They first undermined the union of Church and State in Virginia. A religious revolution precisely on the same principles as the political one which followed, took place when Patrick Henry overthrew the established clergy in the parson's cause. It was this success that gave him weight and enabled him to unite the aristocracy with the

masses of the people (two thirds of whom were now dissenters), in the revolutionary resolutions against the Stamp Act. He turned the popular feeling of the State in precisely the same way against British interference with political liberty in the latter case, as against her infringement upon religious liberty in the former.

The carrying of those resolutions against the Stamp Act was the turning point of the question of revolution, and no one could or would have fought that through but the man who had already led on successfully the former revolutionary struggle.[1] But for his popularity with the people, both his resolutions and himself would have shared a very different fate. It was what he had gained in the religious contest that enabled him to hold the aristocracy of Virginia to the cause of the people; and this united the whole weight and influence of that colony, then the largest from the outset, in the cause of the Revolution. But for all these causes combining, the Stamp Act would have been submitted to. And all through the early part of that struggle, it was Patrick Henry's devotion to religious liberty that drew round him no unimportant measure of his personal popularity and influence. He became the open and voluntary legal defender of the Baptists, and from the very first, as all historians agree, the Baptists, to a man, united in espousing the cause of the Revolution. They were of all classes foremost in their labors and sufferings for its achievement. Throughout the whole country from Georgia to Massachusetts, as Backus[2] and others have shown, they were every where publicly committed to the cause beyond any other religious denomination, and as such their houses of worship were defaced or destroyed, and their

[1] See ante, p. 51.

[2] Backus, ch. xi. p. 196.

congregations subjected to unusual persecutions wherever the British forces came. Their sons joined the army, and their ministers acted as chaplains to the troops.

Jefferson in Virginia did more than most others to give a scientific and formal cast to the principles of liberty in Virginia, and thus largely to the United States; and it is not unimportant to show how he obtained some of his ideas. From the experiments and *failures* of the ancient Greek Republics he unquestionably got many of the checks and balances of his opinions. But he, no less than Patrick Henry, got his first clear conceptions of a free civil constitution from observation of the results of freedom of conscience. Religious government as exhibited by Baptist Churches taught him the form of government best suited to the United States. There was a small Baptist Church which held its monthly meetings for business at a short distance from Mr. Jefferson's house, eight or ten years before the American Revolution. Mr. Jefferson attended these meetings for several months in succession. The pastor on one occasion asked him how he was pleased with their Church government? Mr. Jefferson replied that it struck him with great force, and had interested him much, *that he considered it the only form of true democracy then existing in the world*, and had concluded that it would be the best plan of government for the American colonies. This was several years before the Declaration of Independence. This practical exhibition of religious liberty and equality would seem then to have operated on Mr. Jefferson's mind no little in forming those principles of civil freedom and government which he afterward so ably developed and advocated.

There has been a question raised whether it was not a

Presbyterian Church in the neighborhood, that Jefferson attended for this purpose. Though a matter of no great consequence, it may not be improper to remark that a gentleman of the highest respectability, and well known in North Carolina, told the writer that his attention having been called to the statement, and he knowing that the venerable Mrs. Madison had some recollections on the subject, asked her in regard to them. She expressed a distinct remembrance of Mr. Jefferson speaking on the subject, and always declaring that it was a *Baptist* Church from which these views were gathered. Indeed a moment's reflection would show that it could hardly have been any other. For in no Presbyterian Church is the business ever transacted in the presence of those who are not members, it being all conducted by "the session," as it is called, consisting only of the officers of the Church and uniformly *in private*.

The conception, the *faith* that calls things into existence, the confidence of the practicability of a *free government*, whose ultimate earthly power is vested in the masses of the community—this idea was plainly obtained by Jefferson himself, from a small Baptist Church, meeting month after month to govern itself by the laws of the New Testament, in his own neighborhood. It was certainly the Baptist Churches of this country who were the first to suggest and to maintain those ideas of religious liberty, and of consequent limitations upon the power of the majority to interfere with the rights of the minority, which form some of the most sacred features of American liberty.[1]

It was thus, in more general terms, the Church that gave men in this country a faith in self-government, and a knowledge of the only way in which it could be maintained—a

[1] See ante, p. 56.

faith and a knowledge that have not taken root in Europe, but which are now at work like leaven, and must work until the happiness of nations has grown out of it.

The American Revolution, however, was but the firing of a signal gun for a campaign of liberty in Europe, of which no mortal can even yet begin to see the end. The first French Revolution was the immediate result; an attempt to imitate in France what had been accomplished in America. But there was this important distinction at the outset, which made all the difference in its immediate results—the people had never been used to self-government in religion, and therefore were unprepared for it in politics. They had particularly never received the ideas of Roger Williams, as to the sacredness of conscience, and the reserved rights of the soul. Hence they were unprepared to conceive of true political liberty, or the constitutional rights of each man reserved to him against the anarchical oppression of a majority. They had no pure religion, and therefore could have no true liberty. They had infidel philosophy on one hand, and Papal superstition on the other; the Missal instead of the Bible, and the confessional in the place of family worship, an unscrupulous Jesuitical priesthood instead of a pure and Gospel Church.

It is not in every page of history that this lesson can be so clearly and demonstrably traced out, as just here. In ordinary times, and among common men, the secret forces which the religion of a land is ever exerting, are hardly perceptible; just as the constant vitalizing influence of electricity momentarily at work is not usually perceived, but only the occasional thunder-cloud. Does a land prosper? men bless the wisdom of their own schemes, their education, their laws, their enterprise, their liberties, all these

secondary causes are brought forth in turn, and worshiped, just as of old they cried out by the space of three hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" while yet the First cause, the cause of all other causes of prosperity, is forgotten.

But what are any of these without the vitalizing agency of a pure and simple religion to regulate them and give them sufficiency? What is education? Knowledge truly s power, but power of evil to the bad; of good only to the good. Who would wish to see every tyrant become a giant, and a razor in the hands of every madman? Yet such is knowledge to a people without virtue and piety. What can law effect? It requires good men to make good laws, a good community to support them, and a good heart to love them. What is liberty itself with all its sweets, to the reckless and unprincipled? The veriest bubble that ever child blew. Indeed those arrangements which are best, so long as a majority remain on the side of virtue, are worst where, as in the city of Paris, the majority become corrupt. Not one, nor all things beside can make a land either great or happy. Living religion is the real source of this nation's prosperity—that only can make its truly wise and philosophical arrangements work successfully. We hazard nothing in saying that this country owes more to the prayers and the piety of its ancestry, than it does even to their valor and their wisdom, great as they were. And each denomination and each Christian, in proportion as they contribute to a pure religion, make the most valuable offering to civil liberty.

As in prosperity men exult in the wisdom of their own schemes, instead of glorying in the only wise God, so in adversity they can see no cause for the disruptions of civil commotions, or the sudden panics and fluctuations of com-

merce, beyond excess of trade, fictitious capital, the conduct of the banks, or the political mismanagement of other nations. But the man of piety perceives a cause far above all these. He sees generally some great religious principle violated. The people of America or of England have hastened to be rich, perchance, and they have not been innocent; or those of Italy have trampled on the rights of conscience, and civil liberty lies prostrate. The powers of the Old World have become steeped in luxury and extravagance, and those of the New World, perhaps, are not free from political corruption. Just where the wisdom of the wise man fails him, and the intelligence of the prudent man is brought to naught, and can suggest no remedy, the Christian "has understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do."

All the disasters and failures, all the horrors and excesses of the first French Revolution, are distinctly attributable to the want of a true religion in the hearts of the masses, and were at length traced to it most clearly and distinctly by the very Frenchmen who first tamed this wild political chaos.[1]

What is the whole history of Spain but a repetition of the same great lesson, that liberty can not flourish in the State until men are first accustomed to use and to improve it in religion?

In England, where political liberty has slowly but steadily advanced, it has been preceded by a firm and corresponding progress of religious freedom. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts characteristically went before the Reform Bill, and rendered it inevitable.

The special connection of the Baptists in Europe with all

[1] Alison's History of Europe, vol. ii. p. 200. Harper.

the great movements in favor of liberty, has been one which can never give them cause to blush. During the Revolutionary War, and after Lord Chatham had deserted the cause of the Colonies, the English Baptists remained fast friends to their liberties, and this even while England was carrying on the war; and it is a fact not unworthy of notice and of record, that Robert Hall seems to have received the conception of the very finest passage he ever uttered in the pulpit, or wrote with his pen, from hearing his father and Dr. Ryland, two Baptist ministers, advocating the merits of the Revolutionary cause[1]—a passage considered by the best judges as "unsurpassed by any production of modern or of ancient orators."

If from England we turn to the Continent, almost every kingdom of Europe has, within the last ten years, been on the eve of overthrowing its monarch. The chief reason why so little progress has been made toward liberty is the dread of that infidel, red republicanism, which threatens the destruction of the whole social system. Men wisely, in such circumstances, prefer the known evils of much tyranny to the unknown abuses of utter anarchy. France, the experiment-making nation for Europe, has tried both.

But if now it should be asserted that this connection between Baptists and liberal principles has been of an accidental nature, or if it should be demanded what great religious truths are held by them peculiarly favorable to a true and yet judicious attachment to liberty, we need only remind the reader of some of the principles which we have shown to belong to them universally and eminently.

1. Their reliance *on the Bible, and the Bible alone*, as their rule of faith and practice. This has led them to do every

[1] See Appendix F. p. 411.

thing to place it in the hands of the whole world, and has done more to identify them with the cause of true liberty, more for the progress of mankind, than all the speculations of philosophers.

The freest nations are those which have the Bible most thoroughly inwrought into the texture of their constitutions; not trusting to mere natural religion, on the one hand, or to the Canon Law of Roman Catholicism on the other. If we take, for instance, Christian nations as a whole, and compare them with the heathen kingdoms of the earth, there can be no question but that science, literature, art, national power, individual security, and social happiness greatly preponderate among Christian people. But if we look among nominally Christian nations, and ask where is the greatest amount of true liberty, happiness, and rapid national advancement, the answer must come back, that it is in those nations and in that proportion in which the Bible, the true text-book of Christianity, is most circulated. The whole history of the world shows that atheism on the one hand, and superstition on the other, destroy liberty in any nation.

2. The recognition of inalienable rights is the basis of all freedom, and *the vindication of the rights of conscience* has done more for the liberties of mankind than can easily be estimated.

As we have seen, any bold achievement in favor of religious freedom has always been followed by corresponding successes to temporal liberty. The English Reformation in religion was the basis of modern English and American freedom.

Hence the vindication of the inalienable rights of conscience by Roger Williams, and their practical declaration

by the Baptists in Virginia, did so much to prepare the way for those assertions of the abstract rights of citizens which have been among the characteristic features of American liberty.

Liberty of conscience has ever been the last refuge and hiding-place of all the other rights of man. Hence has it always been the most persecuted and hated by tyrants. Nor is it to be questioned that Roger Williams and all those Baptists before him, who asserted the sacredness of "soul liberty" did in that thing strike the boldest stroke at all tyranny, and establish most firmly the base of all future successful operations against despotism. Liberty of speech on other subjects, and finally liberty of action grow naturally by degrees out of this. Men must ever be educated for liberty before they will know how to use it without infringing the rights of others. Religious freedom prepared and trained this nation for the use of civil liberty, by the happy and considerate acknowledgment of the just rights of all others. A nation not thus trained, like France, found it impossible to be free, because not apprenticed to this considerate use of its liberty.

3. And still more directly are Baptist institutions powerfully friendly to free civil government by the form of their own ecclesiastical organizations. A person looking at the various denominations in this country superficially, might be disposed to believe that the religious and civil governments of a people have no necessary connection with each other. But yet nothing is more certain and demonstrable than that there is a constant tendency in the two to approach each other. In the time of Constantine the government of the Church gradually assumed the form of that of the State, the ranks of the hierarchy and the divisions of its metro-

politan dioceses and patriarchites, corresponding with similar divisions in the Roman Empire. By degrees Rome Pagan was broken in pieces, but Rome Papal grasped the power it had dropped, sat itself in the vacant chair and still imitates, on a spiritual scale, as nearly as it can, the ancient temporal sway.

But notwithstanding all its boasted unity there is much divergence in its practical government in exact correspondence with the political institutions of the various lands into which it is extended. In the United States, for instance, notwithstanding all the efforts of bishops, and councils, and legates, we find a variety of the Roman Catholic religion springing up vastly different from that even of Ireland. We find lay trustees of Catholic Churches capable, sometimes by themselves, of resisting the priesthood. We find the Douay Bible more generally permitted, sermons more frequent and confessions more rare.

In the Episcopal Church of this country again the laity have secured to them, by canons and constitutions, rights quite unknown to the Church of England. On the other hand the State, in like manner, in a great measure imbibes, by a kind of capillary attraction, its constitutions from the religious forms of government to which men are accustomed. Thus the centralization of English Episcopal power in the See of Canterbury helped in no small degree to unite the Heptarchy into one nation. Nor is it without some foundation that an analogy has been supposed to exist between the three orders in the English Church, and the three orders in the British Constitution. It is not, therefore, by accident, but by the natural and inevitable tendency of things that the self-government of the Churches of New England led to self-government in the civil institutions, wrought out

by the Revolution of 1776, or that led even the free-thinking Jefferson, in Virginia, to look forward before the Revolution to the Baptist form of church government, then just becoming popular with the masses, because most free, as the pattern of the future civil government of the Colonies.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

We commenced this volume by tracing the history of the struggle for religious liberty entered into by the Baptists single-handed and alone, and we have seen the principles for which they suffered not only nationalized in this country and engrossed into its very Constitution, but rapidly spreading throughout Europe, rescuing the Mazzinis in Naples from the power of the priests, and Achilli from the dungeons of the Inquisition in Rome. It has penetrated the Mosque of St. Sophia in Constantinople, sheathing forever the persecuting sword of the false prophet.

We have seen, too, Baptist principles the means of reviving, in other denominations, the requirement of personal piety to Church fellowship, until it has made individual choice before full communion, the most distinguishing and obvious feature of American Christianity.

We have seen the influence of this denomination in changing the most firmly established religious usages of society, and banishing infant sprinkling to such an extent that perhaps not one infant in ten, born in the United States, is now the subject of this ceremony where, a hundred years ago, hardly one in ten was left uninitiated. The change thus wrought constitutes one of the most powerful revolu-

tions as to the terms of Christian Church membership that have taken place in a thousand years.

We have seen not only the principles but the practices of the Baptists extending to such a degree that, in addition to the very large number of persons rejecting infant baptism in other Churches, *a quarter* of the whole church accommodation of the United States is in the hands of thos who immerse adults only in baptism.[1]

We have seen this denomination originating those foreign missionary enterprises of modern evangelization which are at this moment producing such astonishing effects upon the nations of the East, dashing the empire of China in pieces as a potter's vessel, and destined apparently to bring about the latter-day millennial glories of the Christian cause. Their ministers were the first to suggest and engage in those gigantic labors of modern Bible circulation, which have published ten times more copies of the word of God in the last fifty years than all which were put in circulation in the previous eighteen hundred, translating the Bible into the languages of a proportionably greater number of the inhabitants of the world.

We have seen their views of religious liberty and the

[1] The last census shows the whole number of the houses of worship for the United States to be 38,061, capable of seating 14,234,825, of this number, *i. e.*, 10,341 houses of worship, capable of seating 3,576,199 persons, are held by churches practicing adult immersion as the only Christian baptism. Those Christians who practice mixed communion are in this estimate mostly counted with the Pedobaptists. I have here included the Campbellites (who do not, however, exceed in number those Baptists in sentiment who are in other denominations), but if they are omitted, it will not essentially vary the result since *without them* a quarter of the whole houses of worship in this country, wanting only seventeen, are Baptists.

reserved rights of conscience made the pattern of the liberties and reserved rights of each citizen, and their very forms of Church government examined by free-thinking philosophers and statesmen, and, after mature deliberation, declared to be suggestive of the best form of government for the people of the United States. Such has been the progress and such have been some of the effects of Baptist principles during the past hundred years.

It surely must be proper and important to trace all this on the ground of *historic truth*. The history of a doctrine of principle is far more valuable than that of a sect. A full account of the Baptists as a denomination has not been the object of this volume. But the history of the spread of *their principles* is far more important to the world, more demonstrative of their truth or falsehood, and more indicative of their future progress, and that of those who uphold them. The men who originate the most important movements, seldom are the men to record them. Those who achieve the materials for history, seldom stop to write them down. Thus far Baptists have wrought rather than written. They have dug a deep foundation, running under ground through the history of Christianity in the world and resting on the Rock of Ages. But as a denomination they have not occupied its pages with a description of the lofty erections which they have reared. As in the construction of some large building it takes months to dig away the rubbish, and lay the foundations firm so that the building seems long in reaching the level of the surrounding earth, while after that, it soon appears as a lofty edifice that shall stand for ages; so thus far the progress of the Baptists has been slow and laborious, while removing errors and prejudices from the minds of nations so as to get a

clear space and settled foundation, upon which to build. But that work accomplished, the rest becomes certain, easy and enduring. As the historian Neander once remarked, "There is a future for you Baptists."

And further, it has appeared to the author proper to exhibit these developments because many of those principles upon which it had been supposed that all Protestants were agreed, have of late years been made the objects of subtler and more dangerous attack than ever before—these attacks usually coming from those who were themselves, in their religious antecedents, leaders in all the evangelical movements among our Pedobaptist brethren. Infant baptism is also the chief instrument in all these opposing movements. In the hands of the sons of a Wilberforce it is the lever by which they and multitudes more, prejudiced against dissent, would upheave Protestantism from the foundation of the Apostles and prophets; in those of Dr. Nevin it conducts to a High Church ground, equally fatal to evangelical piety in others, though not, perhaps, in him. It is time to show historically that on the scale of a hundred years, the most consistent, durable, and reliable plan for an evangelical Church is that of baptism upon a credible profession of personal faith.

But further, this historical sketch of Baptist principles is also written for the sake of many of the Pedobaptist brethren in Christ, who are truly evangelical in spirit, who abhor Romanism in all its forms; who would rather give up infant baptism than encourage Popery, but who also view the Baptists as men doting about questions and strifes to no profit, magnifying little matters and making a mere ceremony the foundation of a sect.

We may ask such candidly if underlying the simple

forms which Baptists profess, there is not a deep and distinctive theory, clear and evangelical, embodying what is vital, necessary, and consistent to Christian visible Church membership in the greatest simplicity—if experience has not proved the importance of our principles not only to ourselves but to the age in which we live. In looking forward to the unknown future, and all the possible changes and corruptions anticipated by such men as Bunsen, likely to take place, it may be asked if these principles do not afford the most secure and consistent platform on which to build Christian Churches. Indeed, seeing that Pedobaptists can admit the validity of the initiatory rite as performed by Baptists, while they are unable to do the same in regard to that performed otherwise, it may be asked if there should not be a general return to the ancient practice of immersion indicated in the original command "*to Baptize*"—and if it could not be deferred altogether, until the time of personal and chosen faith, being now generally acknowledged to be incomplete without it. Then alone it can be valid, and, therefore, appropriate. Other denominations may think it unnecessary and a weakness in Baptists to plead so strenuously for points like these; but they know from the experience of the past that these greatly involve the permanence of the evangelical system.

Many are probably struggling for light upon their path of duty in this very respect. The general decline of infant baptism shows that this must be the case. The remarks and biographies of many of the leading defenders of the system point to the same truth. When such a man as Dr. Bushnell tells us that at the time of his ordination, so strong were his doubts and so little could he find that was positively in favor of the system, that he came near being

rejected from ordination, and could only at last find ground for it in a system which all his brethren give up as full of dangerous tendencies, surely there must be many who have his doubts without his method of resolving them. Dr. Alexander and one of his fellow professors for some years had to give up the practice of infant baptism, and hesitated about the duty of joining the Baptists, and at last were deterred chiefly by the dangerous idea that Baptist "notions of the purity of the Church" are "*too rigid*," and by a want of knowledge of Church history, which, though allowable enough forty years ago, every reader of Neander or Augusti could at once supply.

The writer was assured from a most authentic source, while in an Eastern city of the Union a few years age, that a late distinguished evangelical divine, whose name is familiar to thousands, told a lady who applied to him with doubts upon the subject, that he himself had been much tried in the same way, but at last had concluded these were temptations of the enemy of souls, and had prayed against them as such.

Should such doubts as to the truth of this or any other point of religious duty molest any of our Pedobaptist brethren, nothing surely can be more appropriate than to pray, but not as many excellent men do, prejudging while they pray. A more trusting spirit, and the desire that God will lead them into all truth, clear their minds from mistakes, and give them grace to tread boldly the path of duty; faithful *in that which is least*, as well as in that which appears greatest, is surely wiser. It was no temptation of the Evil One that led Baptist Noel lately to forsake the Church of England and become a Baptist.

When a child is added to a Pedobaptist family, it is

probably dedicated by the pious parents to God in prayer, before any thoughts about a christening occur. But at last the question comes up for practical solution, "Shall we present this child for baptism?" and Scripture is sometimes hunted for proofs, and books and tracts are examined, only to discover how weak and insufficient they all appear in its support. The matter is suffered perhaps to lie over. Another and another little one cause fresh remonstrance on the part of the minister, and fresh investigation on that of the parent, with the settled conviction now that there is no divine authority for infant baptism.

Sometimes a sermon in defense of sprinkling leads to doubt,[1] and the question, often stifled, comes plainly up, "*Am I baptized?*" And then the Christian finds that

[1] The following anecdote was given me by a gentleman who witnessed the scene, in South Carolina:—The Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, in a small community, agreed to build a meeting-house in common—preaching by turns. When it came to the turn of the Presbyterian minister, he said he felt it his duty to preach on baptism, and did so, remarking that he should give them the truth, and the whole truth, on the subject. In the course of his discourse he quoted Heb. x. 22: "Having your hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience;" and there he stopped. A little German member of the Baptist church was sitting in one corner of the house. He could only speak broken English; but, Bible in hand, he turned to each passage referred to. Observing the minister stop at "*conscience*," he continued out loud, "*and your bodies vashed vith pure vater*." This much confused the minister, who to recover himself repeated his last sentence, "having your hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience;" "*and your bodies vashed vith pure vater*," was again the response of the pertinacious German. The minister was so annoyed that he wound up his discourse. The congregation all began to read for themselves, and several became Baptists. As for the little German, he defended himself by saying, "Vy de minister say he vas going to give us de truth and de whole truth, and this vas de *whole* truth."

both the intention and the form, the faith and the ceremony of infant sprinkling, are so completely distinct from those of believer's baptism, that he is *not*. Some will tell him, that though originally imperfect, his faith and subsequent profession have ratified his baptism and made it valid. But he knows that no other instrument, so far departing, both in form and spirit, from the prescribed standard, could be ratified by any subsequent act, but would have to be executed afresh.

Others will urge that "it is a matter of no importance." But he sees that if one sacrament is of no importance, neither is the other, neither are visible Churches, nor ministers, nor Sabbaths—that all stand on the same level, and must stand or fall together—that, whatever may be their importance to membership in the invisible Church, they essentially belong to visible Churches as such, and must be upheld "as they were delivered," or not at all.

Some, like Coleridge, will claim a diecretionary power for the Church to alter and amend its own constitution. But this either makes it a merely human institution, a simply voluntary Society, or else so divine a body that its authority equals that of the Saviour who founded it.

Dissatisfied with every defense of infant baptism, a pious Pedobaptist will often apply to his minister to baptize him. But then the pastor feels that by so doing he would acknowledge that all infant baptism might be reasonably regarded as a nullity. Sometimes this difficulty is got over, and the individual remains in a Church in which he has but little influence, and is perhaps stripped of office on account of his views. He is permitted to remain, but only on sufferance, not on equal footing, while the whole influence of the Church is directed to the support of infant sprinkling,

by its sermons, catechisms, Sabbath-school instruction, and the public administration of it as a Church rite.

Where a person is already a member of an Evangelical Church, to which he is bound by many ties, he may easily think, possibly, that his duty lies rather among them than others.

But then, perhaps, this further view of the case will present itself, that among the duties of the visible Churches is that of *upholding ordinances*, keeping them as they were originally delivered. Each approach to the communion table pledges every member to this. The case then would seem to stand thus: All the members of visible Churches are *trustees*, to whom it is committed of God to see that valid baptism is upheld and urged in His name, and administered to the right characters, and in proper form. A conscientious trustee finds that through mistake and carelessness those with whom he had been accustomed to act have not properly qualified themselves for this duty, and have been in the habit of voting to administer it to unqualified persons, and in a manner quite unauthorized by the trust. He is so satisfied of this that he has anew qualified himself to act in the appointed form. But others remain as ignorant on this subject as he was, and by this means are perpetuating the error and all its evil consequences. There are, however, other bodies of trustees, who, having become duly qualified, rightly administer the trust, and thus correct the mistakes of their erroneous brethren. The question is, *with which of these bodies shall he act in future as a thoroughly consistent Christian man?*

But the subject of this volume will, it is hoped, afford some matter of useful meditation *to Baptists;* and it has been for their sakes chiefly that it has been written. We

ought to mark the faithfulness of the Great Head of the Church to those who act, relyingly upon His word without looking to consequences. The fathers of the Baptist denomination in this country a hundred years ago, were men of this stamp; men of great firmness and independence of character; men who walked alone with God, and could, therefore, endure to stand alone before men. There were among them, here and there, those of cultivated mind and of some repute for learning, and attainments in the denominations they left. But as a body they were all men who loved righteousness—men of great endurance for the truth's sake. If at any time since the baptisms of the day of Pentecost there were a body of persons who, from pure and simple love of truth, and at the cost of every thing most dear to men, came out from the world and sometimes from other denominations, to form new and pure churches, they were the early Baptists of this country. Noble indeed were the Pilgrim Fathers of Massachusetts in all these respects, but they made one mistake. They were afraid to trust the truth to stand alone. They wanted to coerce men to make them good, and to get children committed by vows before they could understand, lest they should not be willing to commit themselves afterward. Such, indeed, has ever been the history of infant baptism, and they simply retained an error which had originated ages before, and which they rendered less harmful than any of their predecessors. But they had many prejudices not easily rooted out.

The Baptists, on the other hand were more completely formed upon *abstract New Testament principles* from Roger Williams downward. To the superficial they may have seemed *too* fond of an abstract correctness with too

little regard to what was practical. It is on this point that we have been anxious to vindicate their memory. For the first hundred years of their existence in this country they stood very much alone, insulted, fined, imprisoned, and despised. In Massachusetts this was the case up to the War of Independence. They were yet more unjustly and cruelly persecuted in Virginia for simply "preaching the Gospel of the Son of God." Few of them had education, and not many wealth. They were looked upon by all others with a hatred it is now difficult to conceive. They needed, and God gave to them, intrepidity of character to endure and to suffer without retaliation on the one hand, or flinching on the other. They were not reeds shaken by the wind; and in raiment they approached him who wore the garment of camels' hair more closely far than those clad in soft raiment, and who feed delicately. They were men deeply impressed with *the importance of the peculiar principles upon which they had planted themselves*—principles unfolded in the former pages of this work; and they reiterated them again and again, not separately, but as an *aggregate*—not in the form of dissected limbs of truth, but as one living body, clothed with flesh, and into which God breathed the breath of heavenly life. These truths lay in their mind as a simple whole, no part of which could be touched and abstracted without some injury to the rest. This was the essence of their Church system, this the life of their cause. The simplicity, the consistency, and the intimate connection of every part with the whole, they deeply felt. That scheme was the same that the Saviour had embodied eighteen hundred years before in the Divine and living organization of His Church system. These men felt its power and, therefore, they spoke. They had a bolder

way of instructing their churches in those truths of which baptism is the symbol, than is now common. They brought it *into the foreground* as the New Testament unquestionably does, and gave it a conspicuousness as the most eloquent preacher of all those fundamental truths with which it was associated in their minds. It was this boldness, this unquestionable Scripturalness of their statements which gave Baptists all their power and success. Itwas not their argu ments but their declarations that succeeded. Their views on baptism do not require much reasoning to prove them true, for they are quite obvious. The burden of proof lies on the other side to show that something else may possibly be true also. It is not by critical discussions on the word βαπτίζω, however appropriate in their place, perhaps, that this controversy is going to be settled or exhibited in its true light, but rather by keeping all the principles of which baptism is the symbol connected together as a consistent *whole*, just as they are combined in the New Testament. And it has been admitted and proved by the ablest organ of Presbyterianism[1] that infant baptism is utterly at war with the whole Scripture representation of this ordinance.

There is not the slightest fear of any Baptists ever coming to disbelieve in the great distinctive features of their denominational sentiments. But there is a danger at the present day of quite a different character, *i. e.*, that they should begin to believe them so plain and clear, as not to be worth maintaining—as sure to make their way without any advocacy.

It is painful to differ from other Christians, and hence the whole subject is often forcedly kept out of sight. Then it is soon urged that baptism is non-essential, and this is reit-

[1] The "North British Review," August, 1852, Art. 3.

erated with an emphasis which shows that a great deal more is meant by it than the very common-place and universally believed truth which the words properly affirm, *i. e.*, that persons may be saved without baptism. But thus, singularly enough, it happens that the very assertion most opposed to the saving efficacy of water baptism, becomes the main argument for not disturbing the corruption of that ordinance which most essentially teaches it. This sentiment generally means in the mouth of those who use it, that "*baptism is a matter of no importance.*" This once admitted, Baptist principles may one after another be rapidly ignored, even where the truth of them is never questioned.

Without a strong regard to their history and the principles of their ancestors, a denomination may quite lose sight of those distinctive peculiarities which have been the source of its usefulness to the Church and to the world.

When a person has been brought up a conscientious and thorough Pedobaptist, and in after life embraces Baptist principles, he generally feels very vividly the importance of the discovery he has made, and the clear and firm Biblical character which true baptism has imparted to the whole system of his belief and practice. Hence he generally becomes a strong and earnest advocate of these sentiments, from a conviction of their importance.

But in Baptist families, among young people brought up in these principles, the feeling is often very different. Without doubting generally the *truth*, they find it difficult to realize the *importance* to the world and to the Church, of views which to them seem so simple as to be quite trite and common-place.

Few children of Baptist parents have perhaps grown up without a difficulty of this kind. They see pious and ex-

cellent Pedobaptists, whom they respect and love, and love as Christians, and they ask what is there after all so important in Baptist principles? Here are Pedobaptist ministers and members, who, except that they hold some exploded and unintelligible notions of infant Church membership, and practice sprinkling, are as good, and as pious, and as wise, as any Christians living.

It takes (we speak from observation), some time, some experience, and some study of the natural development of principles into practices, to know truly how to estimate the importance of any abstract truth, and many persons, for want of this, suppose that Baptists attach too much importance to their own views, and are prepossessed in favor of them, merely because their fathers were, and not because there is any thing in their nature that renders them important.

This work has been written to meet that conscientious laxity of views which arises, not from too great a love of other Christians, but from ignorance of the importance of Baptist principles to the evangelical history of the last century, and to the success of many of those movements which are the greatest glory of the present age.

When an agricultural chemist by minute analysis, has satisfied himself that a particular soil contains two or three thousand parts too much of the protoxide of iron, though the soil may appear excellent, though wheat may grow in it tall and heavy, yet he knows from his analysis that the wheat will be *liable to rust.* And so as he analyzes various soils, he can tell, from differences that escape all, but the most minute tests, that one soil will most productively yield wheat, and another beans, and another clover. The real importance of the study of Church history rests

on the same basis. It enables us to estimate the value to the world and to the Church, of certain principles, to analyze them by the tests of the Gospel, to weigh them in the balances of the sanctuary, and thus to ascertain beforehand, their ultimate effects.

The superficial farmer might esteem it a matter of but little consequence to know if his soil had a thousand parts more or less of gypsum, or the salts of sulphuric acid. But the more enlightened man would regulate his purchase and his expectations upon just such facts as these. So to persons unaccustomed to analyze and estimate the value of principles in history, those of the Baptists may seem of little importance. But to such as look further, we are persuaded they will appear in a very different light. Even on the scale of a century, facts of the deepest significance and importance to all who love evangelical truth, are connected with these principles.

Doubtless in nature, very many of the most important phosphates in the soil, and which weighed separately in the scale of the apothecary would seem pitifully light and commercially valueless, may, as chemical ingredients stimulating the life of every seed, increase the price of land a hundredfold. Or the same amount of rusty iron, which as metal would not be worth a cent, duly mixed up in the soil, may, by means of its very oxidation, give its most important productive qualities to the land. It is thus, too, with principles in the constitution of a Church. By theological analysis we may define, by our systems demonstrate them in few words, but in order for them to have their appropriate and vitalizing power upon the Church and upon the world, it is not enough that they be accurately stated and logically proved, but that they should occupy just that size

and shape, that proportion and position in the Christian life and Church life, which Christ and His Apostles originally gave them.

Many things contribute to produce lax views of these distinctive peculiarities. There is far less actual difference between the Baptists and many other denominations than there was a century back. The Presbyterians are now as a body all evangelical, and nowhere are the doctrines of grace more faithfully preached than among them. The separation of the orthodox Congregationalists from the Unitarians has brought the former of these bodies to the same happy position, with a greater correctness and freedom in their system of Church government. The Methodists, now completely distinct from the Episcopal Church, preach the doctrines of the new birth with the greatest earnestness and success, while what is left of the evangelical portion of the Episcopal Church has become more zealously anti-sacramental from their opposition to Puseyism. These have all drawn much nearer to the Baptists than formerly. They have, too, in most cases, quite altered their *tone*. Now they are generally charitable, brotherly and kind. Some of them have made the most Christian concessions as to the *truth* of these principles, and done ample justice to the exertions of the Baptists. In other instances, and very extensively, without any controversy, they have given up the preaching and the practice of infant baptism. Indeed their chief plea now is that baptism is a non-essential and therefore they suppose an unimportant matter.

The Baptists have also approached other denominations in some respects. All have greatly advanced in the comforts and refinements of life during this last century. In the education of their ministers, in the commodiousness,

style and decorations of their houses of worship, there has been a general assimilation of Baptists with other denominations, to such a degree that in any of our cities and towns a person might attend most of the different congregations for years and so far as these things go, not be able to conjecture with what denomination he was worshiping.

And might we not go further and add that there is so very little that is distinguishing in the character of the sermons themselves, and of the whole worship, and impression left, that unless a person should attend upon some baptismal occasion, he might be present for months and years without being able to discover any of our denominational principles. This would not have been the case a hundred years ago.

The causes of this difference are worth notice. Our young ministers study theology as a science after the College course, and because in that time Baptism as a distinct point may properly occupy but a lecture or two of their systematic theology, they, on entering the pulpit, pursue a proportionable distribution in their sermons, and empty out a course of systematic lectures in which each part of divine truth is separately discussed, and dissected with clerical nicety, but nothing more. This is a grave mistake, not at all necessarily arising from theological education, which should indeed rather correct it. It is just as erroneous as for a surgeon, when sent for to cure a wound, forgetting the distinction between living organism and dead matter, to dissect the limb instead of applying a balm. Let the student analyze closely *in the dissecting-room*, but let the physician of souls never forget that he is sent of God to deal with living men, to bind up their wounded spirits, to establish or to feed the Church, the body of Christ. It is not by analysis but by *synthesis*, not by dissection but by *nutrition* that

this is to be done. There is too much of mere dry discussion, and too little of the freedom of Biblical preaching and exposition, too little of the simplicity and straightforwardness of the Gospel, too little heart in all preaching at the present day.

It is well to consider how completely Churches, like individuals, are altered by becoming imitators of the points of usefulness belonging to others, instead of developing in a natural manner the ideas arising out of their own principles and circumstances.

A few years ago, especially in England, the Episcopal Church was noted for a want of flexibility in all its ministrations. Not only its prayers were previously prepared, but its sermons and its regulations were all gone through with so much formality, and so little adaptation to the various wants of the congregation, as to drive from the establishment many families who wished to enjoy an earnest and practical piety. The Dissenters meanwhile were poor and far inferior in education, wealth and all external attractions. But they were zealous, earnest men, who sought to do the people good. Their preaching was for the most part extemporaneous, it applied the Bible closely to the wants of their hearers, and had little that was dry and dogmatic. It came from the heart and it went to the heart. There might be no choir or organ in the gallery, but the tune was sure to be such that the whole congregation could join. In this way they won upon the masses, who saw among them the signs of a *living* piety, and half the people became Dissenters, supporting the religion of the State, and their own besides. But now all this is much changed. The Dissenters have become wealthy, their church accommodations have improved, scientific singing has greatly superseded

that of the congregation, and scientific essays have too much taken the place of earnest preaching. They have become almost as stiff and inflexible as the Episcopalians used to be.

Meanwhile, among the more pious clergy of the English Establishment there has arisen a spirit of new life. Seeing that they were losing their congregations, they sought and they found out the cause. Many of the bishops exhort their clergy to abandon the habit of reading their discourses, and to preach extemporaneously. They cultivate *congregational* singing, and persuade the whole audience to utter the responses. They study to make their visits, their preaching, and their labors tell upon the masses, and have come round wisely to the greatest possible simplicity and earnestness in their duties. The result is, that they are at this moment rapidly gaining again upon the common people, who, to their surprise, find an earnestness and life in the Established preachers which the Dissenters seem to have lost in anti-Corn-Law leagues, and political excitements. A minister of the Church of England, on visiting this country not long ago, expressed himself with surprise that in so young and free a country the religious services should be so *artificial;* the choir-singing so artistic that few could enjoy it, and the preaching so studied and intellectual that few could follow it; but void of warmth, unction, and popular adaptedness.

In all this, so far as we are chargeable as a denomination, it has originated in imitating others. And as imitations are never natural, and generally extreme and exaggerated, so has it proved here. That it may have been a necessary step in our intellectual progress as a denomination, we would not deny; that it will enable us hereafter to engraft a more comprehensive adaptedness to various condi-

tions of the world and of the Church, is probable. It will certainly allow a greater range and variety, according to the gifts both of speakers and of hearers, and form the basis of a more extended culture and universal usefulness. But it is not less true that all this is but the mark of second-rate culture, even intellectually. As we advance further we shall no doubt come round again to a greater love of simplicity in all our ministratiens.

Then *believer's baptism*, both in preaching and in practice, will occupy a more natural prominence in the ministrations of the sanctuary, and the Spirit of God again in redeeming love, as originally at creation, be found moving "upon the face of the waters."

When, as Baptists, we have better studied our own principles, and learned wherein our true strength lieth, even in simplicity and sincerity, then will self-respect and humility be always combined by us; an earnest desire for the approbation of God, and less care for that of man.

Then all the varied experiences of God's grace will be wisely appropriated, and contribute to our future progress. Then shall we elevate large masses of the community, rising steadily with them higher and higher in intelligence and in virtue. For while a religion too exclusively intellcetual in its sympathies renders the soul cold and sterile, that of earnest spiritual life will impart a genial warmth to the community and to each member, in intellect, heart, and life; "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work."

APPENDIX.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A. Page 133.

STATISTICS SHOWING THE DECLINE OF INFANT BAPTISM.

The following tables are compiled from the reports of the General Assembly, and sufficient for my present purpose. I found it impossible to obtain a complete set of these except in the later years, but the calculations were made with the most extensive tables before me now probably to be found.

Date.	Communicants.	Added on Examination.	Infants Baptized.	Adults Baptized.	Total Baptized.
Presbyterian Church (O. S.)					
1827	135,285	12,938	10,229	2,965	13,194
1828	146,308	15,095	10,790	3,389	14,179
1829	162,816	14,846	12,171	3,982	16,153
1832	217,348	34,160	13,246	9,650	22,896
1833	233,580	23,546	14,035	6,950	21,820
1836	219,126	11,512	11,089	2,729	13,818
1837	220,557	11,580	11,697	3,031	14,728
1838	177,665	9,562	10,164	2,692	12,856
1839	128,043	6,377	7,712	1,644	9,356
1853	219,263	11,846	11,644	2,942	14,586
1854	225,404	13,433	12,041	3,597	15,638
Presbyterian Church (N. S.)					
1838	100,850	4,691	4,426	1,630	6,056
1853	140,452	6,174	4,032	1,715	5,747
Reformed Dutch Church.					
1853	36,597	1,759	2,394	350	2,744

APPENDIX B. PAGE 137.

"THE WAY OF LIFE" BAPTIST IN THEORY.

IF from the statistics of the Presbyterians we turn to their literature, what Baptist can look at such a work as "The Way of Life," by Professor Hodge of Princeton, published by the American Sunday-school Union, without surprise and pleasure. In chapter eight, particularly, Baptist views are taught most clearly. The following abstract has been put into my hands by a friend. It was published some time since in the "Christian Reflector."

The doctrine "that professed believers only are qualified subjects for baptism" has never been more distinctly stated than in this work. The positions "that baptism involves a public profession of the Gospel," and, "that the sacraments are signs and seals of spiritual blessings, and consequently utterly useless without faith on the part of the recipient," are repeatedly enforced and illustrated. The whole spirit and tenor of the chapter on "the Profession of Religion," harmonizes with the strong language which we shall proceed to quote. The first sentence in section two, reads: "That baptism and the Lord's Supper, whatever other important ends they may be intended to serve, were appointed as a mode of publicly professing our faith in the Gospel, is clearly taught in the Bible." Again, "When Christ commanded the Apostles to make disciples, baptizing them, etc., he obviously intended that baptism should be a badge of discipleship, or that by that rite his followers should acknowledge their relation to him." Again, "The Scriptures require those who are admitted to these ordinances to make a profession of their faith and repentance." To sustain this assertion he refers to the baptism of the converts on the day of Pentecost, of the eunuch, of Cornelius, and of Paul, with this concluding remark. "Paul was a penitent believer before his baptism, and thus in *all other cases* when men were baptized, they professed to be Christians." "Baptism implies faith.

If this faith be wanting, baptism can do us no more good than a heartless confession." In a subsequent part of the chapter he defends at length the position that knowledge and piety are necessary qualifications for baptism, or, in his own words, "essential to a proper attendance on the sacraments."

After proving from Scripture his second principal doctrine, that "the sacraments are signs and seals of spiritual blessings," he concludes, "If, however, the sacraments are seals on the part of God, the reception of them implies a voluntary engagement on the part of the Christian, to devote himself to the service of Christ." "To be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, implies a voluntary dedication of ourselves to God as our Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier." He compares baptism to the oath by which a soldier consecrates himself to military service; again to a deed; to the marriage ceremony, and the ceremony of inauguration, all implying the voluntary action of the parties interested.

In answering the important question, what good do these ordinances accomplish, he describes beautifully the invigorating, renovating power which baptism possesses "when the Christian, in the exercise of faith, sees in the water of baptism the lively emblem of the purifying influence of the blood and spirit of Christ." "The Scriptures teach that the sacraments are thus efficacious, not to every recipient, but to the believer," and "to neither rite is any value ascribed apart from the spiritual change which they are appointed to represent." The same sentiments are repeated in a variety of expressions which it is unnecessary to quote, as each one can read the work and thus verify our declaration that it advocates Baptist views. Not a single qualifying remark is introduced to break the force of the statements above quoted, but on the contrary the Professor closes every avenue of escape by saying, "When in human governments the laws prescribe a particular mode in which we are to acknowledge allegiance to our country, it is not competent for us to neglect that mode, nor have we a right to adopt a different method of acknowledgment, or to suffer our allegiance to be inferred from our conduct. And if Christ has

prescribed a particular way in which He will be acknowledged by his followers, intelligently and willfully to refuse obedience to His command is to renounce our allegiance to Him, and to forfeit the benefits of His kingdom."

APPENDIX C. Page 158.

ON THE DATIVE AND THE PREPOSITIONS USED IN CONNECTION WITH *Βαπτίζω*.

Notwithstanding the concessions of Professor Robinson, in his lexicon (last edition), many still appear disposed to hold on to Professor Stuart's view, and strongly affirm that in all these cases, even where the preposition *ἐν* occurs, "the manner of the action is no further designated than the word *βαπτίζω* implies it."[1] Let us therefore more closely examine the rule which Professor Stuart attempts to lay down, and by which he would justify so singular an assertion in connection with his own admissions. Those who do this will never be disposed to adopt such a statement.

"When the genitive or dative is used after the verb, either with or without a preposition, it does not designate the *manner* of the baptism, but only the kind of element by which this baptism was effected. And further still, the connection shows that the preposition, and in fine the whole construction, is no more decisive than the verb alone."

But is this true? He says "it results from the nature of the genitive and dative cases, and the prepositions with which they are connected in all the constructions now in question. To this," he continues, "I make the appeal, and those who know enough of the laws of syntax and idiom in Greek to be qualified to judge, will be able to determine for themselves," etc.[2]

Now to this we too make the appeal, both because it can be clearly shown that Professor Stuart has fallen into a serious error,

[1] Biblical Repos., p. 317. [2] Ibid.

and still more because of the enormous and dangerous superstructure erected on this sandy basis. It is from this, for instance, he sweepingly infers that (setting aside Mark, i. 9), "we may say in *all* other cases in the New Testament, the mode of baptism is left undetermined by the original Greek, so far as the language itself is concerned, unless it is *necessarily* implied by the word *βαπτίζω*; for in all other cases, *only the element* by which, not the mode in which baptism is performed, is designated by the sacred writers."[1]

We shall perhaps see, before we close, that the word *βαπτίζω* *necessarily* implies immersion. But we now only contend that this is its primary and usual signfication, so that there is always a probability of such being the case, until an exception is shown. All this Professor Stuart cheerfully concedes; but it being granted, it is quite a serious grammatical blunder to state that in "all cases" the dative, even the dative and the preposition *ἐν* together, leave the mode as undetermined as they found it; that they "*no further* designate the manner of the action" than the verb *βαπτίζω* alone. On the contrary, as Campbell has shown, the whole together make up a construction that renders the meaning of the verb irresistible, being such a "phraseology" as is never used where sprinkling or pouring alone are indicated.[2]

The dative is, as Kühner remarks in his Grammar, "the where-case," and hence designates as a local object "the place in (by, near, at) which an action occurs." Usually in prose a preposition is added so as to designate the sense more precisely. Where it is not, however, the above is the exact force of the dative alone.[3] In this case the natural signification of the verb must indicate which of these senses the dative has. And it is sometimes capable of doing this very precisely.

Besides the idea of the "*where*," that of "*approach*," lies at the basis of this case, as Buttman has shown, and further, the dative will not only take you to the place, but also point out to you *the instrument with* or *by* which the action of the verb is accomplished,

[1] Page 317. [2] Notes on Matthew, iii. 11.
[3] § 282 (3), and 283 A.

and beyond all this it will indicate to you, sometimes very distinctly, *the manner* in which the instrument is applied. It will point out that an action occurred not only *by* these means, but *in* this manner.[1] What is very singular is, that while Professor Stuart seems inclined to deny from the nature of the dative that it can here indicate *manner*, he says in his Grammar that it is in its nature to do this very thing: "The *manner* in which any thing is done is designated by the dative."[2] Such, then, is the power of the dative *alone*, without the assistance of any preposition to make it more exact. As an illustration of this precision of power, in connection with just these verbs, *βαπτίζω* and *βάπτω*, what can be more complete than that quoted and translated by Professor Stuart, himself, from Aristophanes Eccles.: "They dip the wool *in* warm water (*θερμῷ*)." Here we have exactly the construction in question, a dative without any preposition expressing the *manner* of the action mentioned in the verb, quite as clearly as if we should translate Acts, xi. 16, "John baptized *in* water"—a precisely similar construction.

Perhaps Professor Stuart would say that it is not the *dative by itself*, but the verb that designates the manner, in the case from Aristophanes. It amounts to the same thing. The verb followed by the simple dative forms a construction, then, that may decisively express the manner. Whether it does so in the New Testament, we shall see presently. But Professor Stuart's rule, that the dative "in *all* such cases," *only* designates "the kind of element," and "*nothing further*," is clearly an error, and a very serious one to make in such a case as this, and upon which to build such an enormous inference.

But if, in a case like this, the simple dative may clearly indicate manner, how much more with the preposition *ἐν*, and the following verbs like *βάπτω* or *βαπτίζω*.

"The fundamental meaning of the prepositions appears in the *clearest* manner in indicating the relations of *space*,"[3] and we turn

[1] See Buttman, § 133, 1, 3, 1 (2), Kühner, § 285, chap. i. (3) (*d*).

[2] New Testament Grammar, § 106, 3. [3] Kühner, 286–9.

now more specifically to Matthew, iii. 6, because here such a relation unquestionably is found. Now the primary idea of ἐν is that of being encircled, surrounded, enclosed in, or within a given space. Liddell and Scott, following the great Passow, give as its radical signification "*a being* or *remaining within*." As compared with εἰς and ἐκ, it stands between the two, εἰς implying motion into, and ἐκ motion out of. This Robinson also shows. In the first eight chapters of Matthew, ἐν is in our English version translated "in," or "within," *sixty-one* times, "at," *once*, and "with," or "wherewith," *five* times. This last includes Matthew, iii. 11, where it is *twice* wrongly rendered "with," as we shall see. Throughout the whole of the New Testament, in which it occurs nearly two thousand six hundred times, it is rendered "with" one hundred and twenty-nine times, or less than one time in twenty, and in the greater number of these cases, the distinctive sense of "in," or "within," can be most clearly traced.

Can it then be said with any approach to correctness, that when such a preposition is used as in Matt. iii. 6, after a verb which it is admitted naturally, if not necessarily signifies' '*to dip*," and before the name of a river, that "the manner of the action is *no further* designated? We have the primary meaning of the preposition in just that relation in which its signification is always the clearest (*i. e.*, as to space or place) put in on purpose to certify to us that the natural meaning of the verb is intended here. When Aristotle says, "And dipping it (ἐν ὄινῳ) *in* wine they drink it," Professor Stuart feels the force of the preposition and acknowledges the necessity of just this translation.[1] So in 2 Kings, v. 14, the Sept. reads as Professor S. renders it: "Naaman went down and plunged himself seven times *into* the Jordan." Here, too, we have the same verb βαπτίζω, and the same preposition ἐν;—in fact precisely the same kind of construction as Matt. iii. 6. Professor Robinson considers that the preposition ἐν renders the sense in Matthew, iii. 6 as unequivocal as our English "*in*" makes it.[2] He calls this "an adjunct *of manner*;" while Professor Stuart declares

[1] Page 316.

[2] Lexicon, βαπτίζω, 2 *a. β.*

that in this and *all* cases of a similar construction "*the manner* of the action is *no further designated* than the word βαπτίζω implies it."[1] It is difficult to understand how Professor Stuart could have deliberately penned such a sentence. It is true that the sense of all prepositions is greatly to be ascertained by their correspondence with the meaning of the verb. But it were a mistake at variance with every principle of language to suppose that they are capable of adding nothing to its force and clearness. This is, in fact, just what they are for. Here the usual sense of the preposition corroborates beyond all cavil the usual sense of the verb. It is more indicative of immersion than any that could have been employed (unless εἰς should be thought an exception); a preposition which is never used with verbs signifying to sprinkle, but yet is most commonly put in connection with the rite of baptism. It is clearly the duty of every translator, then, to render the preposition as King James' version has done, "*in*" the Jordan, both in Matt. iii. 6, and the parallel passage, Mark, i. 5. Indeed, all translations agree in this. The fact before alluded to, that Jesus was confessedly baptized at the same time and place, and by the same person, *in* this river, makes the whole about as irresistible to the interpreter of the language of Scripture as any thing could make it; and this not in regard to one or two cases, but literally thousands of instances, for "There went out unto him *Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan*, and were baptized of him *in* Jordan," ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ.[2]

It is, therefore, an error involving many thousands of instances, as shown by Campbell and Professor Robinson, for Professor Stuart to assert that "in all other cases except Mark, i. 9, the mode of Baptism is left undetermined unless it is necessarily implied by the word βαπτίζω."[3]

But there are other passages where the same preposition ἐν also occurs, though differently translated by our common version; as Matt. iii. 11.[4] I, indeed, baptize you *with* (ἐν) water." But here

[1] Page 317. [2] Matt. iii. 6. [3] Page 317.

[4] See also, Mark i. 8, John, i. 26, 31, 33.

the Douay version and several others translate correctly, "I indeed baptize you *in* water." So does the able critic Dr. Campbell. Professor Robinson gives the sense "*in* water" in all these cases in his Lexicon.

But now in three instances, all relating to John's baptism, and precisely parallel in sense to the cases in Matthew and Mark above, rendered "*in* water," Luke, after the verb, inserts the simple dative ὕδατι in Luke, iii. 16, Acts, i. 5 and xi. 16. This is a usage peculiar, in the New Testament, to this writer. It is not, however, uncommon to good classic authors. Professor Stuart has cited a similar instance from Aristophanes, as we have seen. But does he render it "They dip the wool "*with* warm water" θερμῷ? Certainly not, but "*in* warm water."

Professor Robinson, though translating the parallel passage[1] "*in*," would render Luke, iii. 16, and the similar cases, "*with* water."[2] He seems to have forgotten that what he terms the dative of *instrument* may *also* specify the *manner*.[3] Dr. R. would probably defend his mode of rendering, on the ground that "he as a *translator*, should not be blamed for not expressing *definitely* in a translation what is indefinite in the original."[4] But he thus erroneously supposes that the verb is *naturally* quite indefinite as to mode. Chiefly, however, is he in error because in rendering the preposition "*with*" he *excludes* the natural and most probable sense of the verb, and under the plea of indefiniteness, denies as definitely as possible that to be its meaning which in a parallel passage he has adopted, for we never speak of "immersing *with* water."

If Professor Robinson were right in this last case, it would clearly make it the duty of the interpreter of Scripture to *erase* or contradict the work of the translator; since if Luke, iii. 16 is doubtful, Matt. iii. 11 being clear, it would be the duty of the interpreter to harmonize the two by making the passage in Luke conform to that in Matthew, and regarding the sense as in both cases clearly "*in* water."

[1] Matt. iii. 11.

[2] See Lexicon βαπτίζω, 2 a. β.

[3] Kühner, § 285, 3. d.

[4] Stuart's Ernesti's Appendix on Translation.

Here, plainly, Luke, iii. 16, is the precise parallel in sense, abbreviated only in form from Matt. iii 11, but so alike as to imply a common origin. Hence, by the rule of the obvious passage clearing up the doubtful one, must we consider this as a case in which the preposition is to be *understood*, and as omitted only by an ellipsis which has no right to be considered any ambiguity at all, but as an idiom common to Luke, to be conveyed, like all other idioms, in clear and suitable terms in translation.[1] This Campbell has done in his version of Luke, iii. 16.

In fact, looking at the meaning of this command, merely from the expressions in themselves considered, not only is the "probability in favor of immersion," as Professor Stuart admits, but the sense in every case is obvious and certain, by only letting the more fully expressed passages explain the elliptical, instead of attempting, as he inconsiderately does, to throw doubts upon the sense of the clearest imaginable cases by those less fully stated.[2]

However, it is sufficient here to bear in mind this one fact; that whatever is the probable meaning of the words of a command, *that and that alone is the command.*

APPENDIX D. PAGE 169.

ON ROMANS, VI. 4, AND COLOSSIANS, II. 12.

PROFESSOR STUART maintains that in Rom. vi. 4, the phrase "buried with him by baptism" does not refer to the mode of "*literal* baptism" at all, but that an internal moral burial to sin alone is intended. His views are to be found in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, and in the Biblical Repository, April, 1833, particularly this last. He argues as follows:[3] (*a.*) "There is here an antithesis," *i. e.*, a *burial* on the one hand, and a *resurrection* on the other, and that as the resurrection is clearly spiritual, the burial

[1] Campbell's Rhetoric, Book ii. ch. vi. sec. 1, part i.

[2] See p. 315.

[3] Page 328.

must be also. But whoever marks closely this verse, will find that the whole figure is carried out with more than usual precision. The antithesis to the spiritual *resurrection* is the spiritual *death* to sin (verse 3.), after which we are *buried* by baptism, and so the antithesis to the burial is, strictly speaking, not our resurrection, of which there is no mention in verse 4, but "the walk in newness of life," which takes place correspondingly *afterward* in both cases.

(*b.*) But Professor Stuart argues that "nothing can be plainer than that the expression we are *buried* with Christ, Romans, vi. 4, is equivalent in sense to we are *dead* with him, verse 8."[1] It is rather suspicious for an argument when he who adduces it has to begin by saying that it is so *very* plain. To us the opposite is very plain. A burial always embraces the idea of death, *but also something more.* Or rather it is the symbol, *proof*, and public acknowledgment of a death, not the death itself. So baptism is not the death, it is the symbol (verse 5), and the public acknowledgment or attestation of the death. And throughout these verses, the death is spiritual, but the burial in water is physical, attesting it.

(*c.*) The last argument of Professor Stuart is, that he does "not think immersion a very natural symbol of burial," and finds it nowhere else in Scripture. Most persons find it a very striking symbol, but on this point each reader can judge for himself. It is used here, and Col. ii. 12. To us it seems impossible to conceive of the figure of burial twice, thus used in reference to baptism without an allusion to the most obvious sense of the word itself. Why else was it introduced at all?

It may here be added that Professor Stuart runs the parallel between this passage in Romans, and Colossians, ii. 12, all the way through, apparently attempting to explain the one passage by the other. We say apparently, for the real argument leads exactly the other way, amounting in fact to this: Colossians, ii. 12, is obscure, Romans, vi. 4, is somewhat parallel, therefore we must encumber the passage in the Romans, with the difficulties and obscurities of that in Colossians.

[1] Page 329.

This is exactly what we have to complain of all the way through Professor Stuart's discussion of this question, that instead of following the established rule, and interpreting the difficult passage by the clear one, all is reversed, and doubts are cast upon the plainest passages, *because* some others may be less palpable.

And yet Colossians, ii. 12, is obvious enough, even by itself. "Buried with him (ἐν) baptism; wherein also ye are risen with Him, through faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead." It takes no little ingenuity not to perceive a reference in the burial here to immersion. If there were nothing said about a resurrection in the second clause, Professor Stuart himself would feel no doubt about the allusion, and certainly here the latter clause has no right to unsettle the plain meaning of the first, whatever doubts there may be as to its own construction. Try the figure by the common meaning of the word βαπτίζω, *i. e.*, to "immerse," and then read "we are buried with him in our immersion," and who can doubt that the one alludes to the other. In fact, if there were a dozen significations all *equally* current, this would be enough to show which we should prefer.

But what is there to disturb this conviction in the latter clause, "wherein also ye are risen with him," and this, if it stood alone just thus, would be a plain allusion to the rising up again in the waters of baptism; the connectives "*wherein*, *also*," fixing the sense beyond question. But here Professor Stuart would remark that we have not yet read the whole clause, "wherein also ye are risen with him *through* (διά) *faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead.*" Here then it is said the resurrection is declared to be "*through faith*," and hence it must be the *spiritual* resurrection of the *soul*, which is alluded to, not of the body in water baptism. Suppose it were so, for a moment, what then? Why then it must be supposed to follow that there is in the term "resurrection," here, no allusion to the mode of baptism, and then as the resurrection is put as the antithesis to the "*burial*" of the first clause, that also must be understood as a "*moral burial*," and not a literal one in water, so that there is here

no allusion at all to the mode of baptism, and then the language of Romans, vi. 4, can, by being esteemed parallel to it, be also explained without supposing any reference to immersion. Such is the only process by which Professor Stuart would explain the allusion to immersion out of these passages. "An ever-widening spiral *ergo* from the narrow aperture of a single text." Though who does not see a want of conclusiveness in every step of this long chain, by which to draw immersion away from baptism? But it is certain that the usual rendering of the connectives of the second clause, "*wherein also*," (ἐν ᾧ καὶ), can be set aside, indicates that we are raised up as well as buried "*in baptism*," even if by a mode of speaking common with St. Paul, we supposed a reference *also* to that spiritual resurrection of which baptism is the symbol. This would not disturb the meaning of the first clause which is so *clear*, or the sense might be regarded as elliptically expressed, and fully written out thus: "Buried with Him in baptism, in which rite also ye have been raised up with him symbolically from the water, even as ye were truly raised up from spiritual death, through faith of the operation of God," etc. But why should we not regard faith to be here represented by a carrying out of the figure as a spiritual arm that supports us unseen through the water, and raises us up again. Certain it is that we are here expressly said to be raised up *in baptism*, if we give ἐν ᾧ the usual interpretation.

To obviate this, Professor Stuart introduces a different translation, rendering it "*with whom* also ye had been raised up by faith." etc. This makes the ἐν ᾧ refer to Christ, and not to the baptism. This is a possible rendering, but *not the natural one.* The Syriac, which must have great weight in a question of this kind, translates the passage, "Ye have been buried with Him by baptism, and by it ye have risen with Him, while ye believed in the power of God who raised Him from the dead." Macknight renders it "in which, *i. e.* baptism, ye also are raised with Him." Conybeare gives the sense "*wherein.*" Otherwise, indeed, the correspondence between the two antithetical clauses of the figure is damaged, the burial being in the baptism, and the resurrection

in the Saviour. In fact, apart from the baptismal question, there is not a single reason in favor of this translation, but all are against it.

Suppose, however, Professor Stuart's rendering to be adopted, and it were granted that the resurrection is expressly in Christ, by faith alone, and refers not in any shape to baptism, then it will be found that the chief ground on which he builds his whole hypothesis of there being no allusion to immersion, in Romans, vi. 4, is cut away. For that ground was that we must suppose a perfect antithesis between the burial and the resurrection. But by the new translation of Colossians, ii. 12, it is not so, for according to it, the death is in some way by the means of (ἐν) the *physical* or literal act of *ourselves* in baptism, but the resurrection by means of (ἐν) the *spiritual* work of *Christ* upon our hearts. This is not to be got rid of by any signification we give to the preposition ἐν, as applied to the *burial*, for the noun remains the same, *literal* baptism. But if it be said that the literal act of baptism really embraces a *moral* act or vow, subjecting the soul to Christ, as well as a physical act, subjecting the body to the water, and that it may be in allusion to the *moral*, and not the physical act of baptism; still the antithesis would then be incomplete as ever, for it would be a *moral* burial by the choice of the candidate, while the resurrection would be a *spiritual* resurrection by that prior act of the Divine mind, which is the *cause*, and therefore not the *antithesis* of the vow or moral burial in baptism. The term baptism, however, here can not be understood in any such way as to *exclude* the physical act, or have other than primary reference to it. None can show indeed that there is here reference to any thing beside the physical act. Whatever remoteness as to means might be grounded upon the preposition ἐν (as possibly meaning *at*), in Colossians, ii. 12, by contrast makes the sense of Romans, vi. 4, the stronger, for there instead of ἐν, we have διά, "we are buried with him *through* baptism into death."

No more complete proof is needed of the utter impropriety of Professor Stuart's interpretation of this passage, than the *difficulty*

which every reader must and does experience in realizing the Professor's meaning in his own mind, even after he has translated it after his own fashion. We have been buried with Christ "*by* or *at* baptism." To turn our eyes perforce away from the most obvious reference of "baptism," here, for the sake of a more abstract and remote idea, *i. e.*, that at the time of our baptism we made a vow to be spiritually dead and buried to sin, seems like a man from prejudice shutting his eyes so as not to see immersion.

Nothing surely can be more plain, therefore, than the allusion here to immersion. This is shown as well by the unanimity of ancient, as modern critics.

APPENDIX E. Page 310.

THE MISCONCEPTIONS OF OPEN COMMUNION.

The advocacy of open communion, generally arises from a series of misconceptions, which only need to be pointed out to be abandoned. It is commonly supposed that by failing to invite any person to unite with us in the Lord's Supper, we say in effect that he is no Christian. This arises from the ancient error which is the basis of Popery, *i.e.*, confounding the terms of membership in visible churches, and in the invisible church, baptism, and regeneration. Sometimes our opponents seem actually to suppose that we do not believe, or at least, have some doubt, if persons can be saved without baptism—and that we do not administer the Lord's Supper where we deny the sufficiency of the baptism *on this account.*

But in fact, our principles essentially involve the exact opposite of this. We never baptize any until *after* the candidates have made a credible profession of Christian faith, the forgiveness of sins, and a regenerate heart. It is impossible for us, therefore, to suppose that the outward act of baptism is essential to the reception of these blessings. Infant baptism can only be immediately

useful to the child by an *opus operatum*, and must naturally favor the idea of its influencing salvation. But that of adults upon a credible profession of faith cuts at the root of any such view. Robert Hall, therefore, in his letter to a clergyman of Cambridge, wrote: "Our sentiments upon the baptismal rite exempt us from any temptation to lay undue stress upon it. We consider it merely as the symbol of a Christian profession, while you profess to believe it regenerates the partaker and makes him a child of God."[1]

It is true that in common with all other evangelical Christians, we hold that *the disposition* to submit to whatever is clearly and deliberately perceived to be the will of God on every subject, is essential to saving piety, and, therefore, to our salvation. All Christians know that just at the turning point of conversion, trifling with conscience in little things, may and does produce the most fearful effects on spiritual character. But beyond this which others would admit as cheerfully as themselves, it is from no suspicion of the sincere piety of their Pedobaptist brethren that Baptists decline to unite with them in the celebration of the eucharist. Were any of these to present themselves and be received as candidates for baptism by one of our Churches, yet if any circumstance prevented their receiving that ordinance before the next communion, they would not participate, simply because our principles of membership do not recognize any persons as members of our churches until *after* baptism, although we always recognize their Christian character *before*.

It is an error to suppose the Lord's Supper an ordinance to be administered simply on the principle of including all that we suppose Christ will at least include in His kingdom of glory and no others; to suppose the terms of membership in each true visible Church of Christ to be the same precisely as those of the great Universal Church which is invisible, whether they unite themselves to any visible Church or not. Yet this is the main pivot of Robert Hall's whole argument. He says, over and again, taking

[1] Works, vol. 4, p. 636.

for granted, indeed, rather than attempting to prove it, that the Universal Church "differs from a particular assembly of Christians *only* as the whole differs from a part." It might as reasonably be said that a family differs from a nation "*only*" as a part differs from the whole. A nation is a larger body, it is true, and it embraces many families, but does it, therefore, follow that the constitution of the family circle is and ought to be identical with that of the State, or that every individual or family residing in the State is entitled to vote, whether aliens or not, and further that every person who might be entitled to the privileges of citizenship should, therefore, have a right to be considered at all times, and as long as he pleased, a member of any family?

The terms of membership in the two bodies, though harmonious in their general principles, are radically distinct in this respect at least, that the Universal Church, is, while on earth, an *invisible* body. It is composed of all those who have faith in Christ, whether they have professed that faith by joining a Church, or, like the dying thief, have not. But some kind of credible *profession* of faith must be necessary to visible Church membership. And further, as we do not read the heart, the actual possession of faith can not always be requisite to visible membership, since it can not be determined. Hence, all visible churches contain some members who do not belong to the invisible communion.

Neander illustrates the distinction, "John describes an *inward* community, the assemblage of those who stand in communion with the Redeemer, and which embraces the whole development of the divine life among mankind; and an *outward* community of believers, which it is possible for those to join who have no part in the former. * * * We find here as in St. Paul's writings, the distinction of the *visible* and the *invisible* Church."[1]

The visible churches are also independent bodies, just as all the families in a community are independent in their household arrangements. Hence, it does not follow that because an individual is entitled to enjoy the privileges of a home in his own family, he

[1] Planting and Training, book vi. chap. 4, pp. 320, 321.

is, therefore, at liberty to claim all the same prerogatives in any other, as he may see fit to demand them. So must it ever be, measurably, in well regulated Christian Churches.

The Lord's Supper is a symbol of this among other things—our union with those with whom we celebrate it in *visible* church relations. Indeed, all ordinances belong, not to the invisible Church, as such, but are committed to the visible Churches of Christ.

Unbaptized persons are not invited to join with us in the Lord's Supper simply because they do not unite with us, in their ideas of visible Church membership, that is in regard to ordinances, the very subjects committed to Church custody. The articles of faith in every Pedobaptist Church, by upholding and requiring infant baptism do, in fact, the same thing. But this never was meant to indicate, and it never can, that all others are not true members of the invisible Church.

Another mistake often made is, that we are supposed, at least, to "unchurch" all other denominations, or say in effect that we do not consider them true visible Churches of Christ. But it is one of the great advantages of our practice that it delivers us from the impossible and vain task of deciding what, in the judgment of the great King, are, and what are not true visible Churches. We do not profess to invite all that are members of what we believe to be such bodies to our communion tables. Those who do, have virtually to make out a list, and by excluding some denominations, as the Roman Catholics, or Greek Church, and including others, such as Episcopalians, assume a prerogative which in His alone "whose eyes are as a flame of fire," and "who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks."

But regarding the Lord's Supper as we do, to be an ordinance committed in charge to *each particular* Church, as such, just as the Passover was originally committed to each family to celebrate, while all were commanded to keep it, so we only invite those to unite with us on such occasions as either are members of our particular churches, or who may, in fact, be so considered for the time being. A man may be a conscientious and sincerely

pious Roman Catholic, or Nestorian, or member of the Greek Church; and we should be sorry by any act of ours in refusing to unite with him in the Lord's Supper, to deny that he could be a Christian, or seem to assert his Church to be so corrupt that no good man could belong to it, and only more sorry by uniting with him to endorse the Roman Catholic or Universalist systems. There are many matters about which a Church of Christ, as such, is not called upon to pronounce any opinion. Where a person is baptized upon a credible profession of his personal faith, his position is *clear*. As the member of a body with a constitution perfectly analogous with every other Baptist Church, if temporarily sojourning with any of our churches he may consistently, if all see fit, be regarded as a member for the time being, and as such, receive the Lord's Supper. But without baptism he could not join any Baptist Church. To certify him, therefore, to the world as such would be to profess what is not true. But if we admitted some without a valid baptism, on the ground of personal piety when we declined to receive others, we should thus deny the pretensions to godliness of all we declined to receive. We may esteem persons as Christians, or some may so regard them, and others may not; their conversation or deportment may justly satisfy individuals, but union with some Christian Church that requires what we require—a valid baptism as a public profession of personal piety is but a proper antecedent to being recognized by us in a matter involving church relations. Otherwise, to accommodate the ceremonial eccentricities of individuals, we must pour contempt upon the *Christian* character of millions.

It is with us in this matter as voting is in relation to citizenship. A foreigner might live in this country many years, and make it his home. He might pay his share of the taxes, enjoy the protection of its laws, and from an honest preference for its institutions have transferred to it the allegiance of *his heart* and his affections. But if from neglect or mistake he had not been through the forms of naturalization, or any other forms necessary to entitle him to vote, and he should present himself at the polls, although the officer

might know him personally, and respect his character and intentions and be sure that he was better qualified, morally, than thousands, it would not be right to permit him to vote, and might vitiate a whole election. By so doing the only barrier would be broken down that prevents the inhabitants of the whole world from overthrowing the liberties of this country. In all other respects he could enjoy the blessings of its institutions. He could travel unmolested where he pleased, be protected from injury, engage in any business, be received with esteem and friendship according to his real worth and character, but while he neglected the forms of naturalization he must abstain from voting. *To enjoy ceremonial privileges there must be ceremonial qualifications.*

It is not necessary to deny that other bodies may be true (though irregular) Churches of Christ. For one, the writer of these pages would frankly say that the term "church," *εκκλήσια*, signifying "congregation," or "an assembly, of men," any body regularly assembling for the worship of God, and composed of persons making a credible profession of Christian piety, may be, he considers, a Christian Church, though very irregular and erroneous in its organization and modes of government.

Hence there are Christian Churches of various kinds and degrees of irregularity, some in which the world is so mixed up, that they can barely be considered Christian Churches at all. Some that call themselves Churches, like the Roman Catholic and Greek communions, having indeed become so corrupt that they stand like old and decayed trees, all dead, except here and there a limb with a few scattered leaves on, in which alone vitality lingers; others, again, fresh and green, richly laden with the fruits of a healthful piety. It is the duty of each Church to take the New Testament for its model, and by these means secure the greatest possible fruitfulness. Nor can any Baptist doubt that the only *regular* and primitive way is for churches to be composed only of those who have received a true baptism on a credible profession of the Christian faith.

It will be urged, however, that surely membership in an evangelical Church of another denomination ought to be esteemed sufficient.

We gladly admit that so far as the *spiritual* qualifications are concerned, there are evangelical churches whose care in receiving none but the converted is at the present time generally as great as our own on the whole. But then it must be borne in mind that in not one of these denominations was it so a hundred years ago; and except perhaps among the Congregationalists, this principle is not *now* embodied in their confessions of faith. Only a few years ago we knew a gentleman who was a regular communicant of an orthodox Congregational Church in New England, under one of the most evangelical of their ministers, and who had been for many years, but did not profess, and *never had professed* to have undergone any change of heart. He went to the clergyman and claimed to be admitted, and *was admitted* on his baptism in infancy, according to the theory defended by Dr. Stoddard. To this day the Presbyterian confession of faith does not render conversion necessary to full Church membership. It might at any time revert, without violating a letter of its constitution, to the unconverted membership and ministry it had before the Tennents arose, and common in the National Church of Scotland.

Our Methodist brethren exhort those who avowedly have no experimental evidence of spiritual life to join their classes and come forward and *partake of the Lord's Supper as a means of grace*, assuring their hearers that they have known many to be regenerated at the communion-table. Still so far as our Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist brethren are concerned, as a whole we believe that membership of any of their Churches *now* would be in general as credible an evidence of personal piety as we could desire. But this is with them a recent and changed phase of their piety, and without the conservative feature of believer's baptism, it might all change back again any day. The influence of infant baptism tends that way all the time, and would unquestionably destroy evangelical Church membership, but that, as we may now

hope, evangelical religion is about to destroy it. But of all the Pedobaptist sects represented in this country, and their number is not small, there is not one that as a denomination has ever maintained, even in theory, a converted Church membership for a hundred years together, and hardly for fifty years.

And while we fully feel, and delight to acknowledge as far as possible the evangelical character of these denominations at present, we have no right to undertake, by invidious and impracticable distinctions, to decide what are not evangelical Christian churches. We simply take the ground that these churches, however spiritual or otherwise, are constituted without reference to a valid baptism, that is one on a credible profession of personal faith. That they are so *irregular*, in this respect, that we should not wish to be united with them ecclesiastically, as they would not with us.

In all cases the rule of communion must be based on the visible Church membership of the party invited, and not his own spiritual character apart from that. For instance, we are to invite a *pious* Episcopalian to unite with us, it is urged, but are we then to invite *every* member of the Church of England, when it is notorious that while it has produced some of the most excellent Christians upon earth, vast multitudes of its communicants know nothing of true piety, and half of them are characterized by the most intelligent of their own members "as very visible rogues and scoundrels, believing neither in God nor devil." We may doubtless find pious members of the Church of Rome, but shall we invite them to unite with us, and acknowledge it to be a true and Divine Institution on that account? The Presbyterians have decided that the Church of Rome is no longer a true Church now; but that it was until the time of the Reformation. In our view, this is an unnecessary, unprofitable, and even erroneous decision. What is called the Church of Rome is in fact the aggregate of thousands of churches, and some may be living bodies, as others are certainly dead. The Jesuits' sections were in the gall of bitterness, while the Jansenists were probably living branches of the true vine. The candlestick of the Church in Rome itself may by the Great

Head have been removed out of its place, and its light extinguished, however many wax tapers may have burned upon its altars. Its people and priests may have been shut up in darkness to believe a lie, while the Son of Man was holding Wickliffe as a star in his right hand, and walking in the midst of his little church at Lutterworth, in Wales, trimming its lamps, and pouring oil upon its flame. Yet Wickliffe offered to defend his principles at first before the Pope; nor is it possible among Pedobaptist Churches to draw the line, for the worst denominations will exhibit the most pious individuals occasionally. The corrupt court of Louis XIV., at Versailles, could boast of its Masillon, and the Jesuits have with reason extolled the piety of Francis Xavier.

But to receive every man we esteem an experimental Christian without any regard to an evangelical Church-membership and regular profession would be, as we have seen, like letting every foreigner vote whom you esteem a worthy and intelligent man, without any regard to the certificate of citizenship.

It is a mistake very commonly made, to suppose that Baptists are *different* from other denominations in not inviting all Christians, as such, to unite with them on sacramental occasions. This is a great error. They do, indeed, differ from them as to baptism, but we know of no denomination of Christians who have ever esteemed it proper to admit those whom they considered unbaptized to their communion table. Bishop White refused the communion to an evangelical Quaker. But few of any denomination would admit that there could be such a thing as a visible Christian Church, in *any sense* of the term, without a true baptism. It is a question with which the present discussion has nothing to do; and it may be admitted or denied. But certainly common sense suggests that where ritual communion takes place in respect to one ordinance, it ought in the other. To say that Pedobaptists would admit the members of Baptist Churches to their communion is nothing, for they do not doubt the validity of such baptism: Baptists more than doubt the validity of theirs. The question is, would Pedobaptists admit pious members

of unbaptized bodies to their table? This they can not do, at least consistently with their standards.

In the Methodist Book of Discipline, for instance, it is expressly enjoined, "Let none be received into the Church until they have * * * *been baptized*," etc.[1] And no person is to be admitted to the Lord's Supper upon principles which would exclude them from the Church.[2] The Presbyterian Confession of faith declares baptism to be a sacrament "*for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church.*"[3] So all the Congregational Divines, and so the symbols of every Reformed Church, and Church not reformed. All contain the same truth without a single exception. Dr. Wall, in his history of infant baptism, admits this in the fullest terms, declaring that "no Church ever gave communion to any persons before they were baptized."[4] And even Robert Hall fully admits that "the members of the primitive Church consisted of only such as were baptized." * * * "We are willing to go a step further," he proceeds, "and to acknowledge that he who, convinced of the divine origin of Christianity by the ministry of the Apostles, had refused to be baptized, *would at that period* have been justly debarred from receiving the sacramental elements; * * * he would undoubtedly have been repelled as a contumacious schismatic."[5]

There is one further misconception that we wish to clear away from this question. Many persons are inclined to suppose that because our Pedobaptist brethren really *believe* that they have been baptized, they are entitled to be treated in regard to the communion as though they had been. If that were so in regard to this matter, it would have to be carried out into every thing. Whoever thought himself baptized would be, and there the whole matter would end. If Baptists admitted the validity of infant sprinkling as baptism at the communion table, it would be difficult for them to deny it at the water's edge. The Christian world could never believe them sincere in asserting such Baptism

[1] Ch. ii. sec. ii. [2] Ch. i. sec. 23. [3] Conf. of Faith, ch. xxviii. 1.
[4] Part ii. ch. ii. [5] See Terms of Communion, part i. sec. iii.

invalid if they admitted the sufficiency of every man's own opinion in the matter. Morally the prejudices of education may make it some excuse for not being baptized, but can not alter the fact; and the question to be discussed is, whether unbaptized persons, if regenerated, are entitled to unite with Baptist Churches in this ordinance, and as members. Mr. Noel states this point with clearness: "I believe each person who has been merely sprinkled in infancy is unbaptized, because the external act of baptism is immersion, and that act is meant to be a profession of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The person sprinkled in infancy has neither been immersed, nor has he made through his reception of the sprinkled water any profession whatever of discipleship; he is, therefore, wholly unbaptized." He then proceeds to "advocate the right of such persons to a place at the Lord's table, in *Baptist* Churches." Though how it could remain a *Baptist* Church if every unbaptized believer had equally a "right" there, he does not explain. Robert Hall had the consistency to give this point up, and admit that his system would destroy all denomination.

APPENDIX F. Page 361.

ROBERT HALL ON THE AMERICAN WAR.

"One evening our conversation turned on the subject of the war with America, previously to the acknowledgment of the independence of the United States. Mr. Hall said, 'Sir, that war was very unpopular, and considered to be very unrighteous, by men of true liberty principles. My father, sir, warmly advocated the American cause. When I was a little boy, he took me to the school of Mr. Ryland, at Northampton, the father of Dr. Ryland of Bristol. This Mr. Ryland was very eccentric, and a violent partisan of the Americans. It was in the hottest period of the war, sir, and many persons were very indignant at the conduct of

the English government. That war, sir, was considered as a crusade against the liberty of the subject and the rights of man. The first night we arrived at Northampton from Arnsby, sir, the two old gentlemen (my father and Mr. Ryland) talked over American politics until they both became heated on the same side of the question. At length Mr. Ryland burst forth in this manner: 'Brother Hall, I will tell you what I would do if I were General Washington.' 'Well,' said my father, 'what would you do?' 'Why, Brother Hall, if I were General Washington, I would summon all the American officers; they should form a circle around me, and I would address them, and we would offer a libation in our own blood, and I would order one of them to bring a lancet and a punch-bowl, and he should bleed us all one by one into this punch-bowl, and I would be the first to bare my arm, and when the punch-bowl was full, and we had all been bled, I would call upon every man to consecrate himself to the work by dipping his sword into the bowl and entering into a solemn covenant engagement by oath one to another, and we would swear by Him that sits upon the throne, and liveth forever and ever, that we would never sheath our swords while there was an English soldier in arms remaining in America; and that is what I would do, brother Hall.'

"Mr. Hall said to me, 'Only conceive, sir, my situation, a poor little boy that had never been out of his mother's chimney-corner before, sir, sitting by these two old gentlemen, and hearing this conversation about blood. Sir, I trembled at the idea of being left with such a bloody-minded master. Why, sir, I began to think he would no more mind bleeding me than he would killing a fly. I quite expected to be bled, sir."[1]

He who, after reading the above, peruses the following paragraph from Robert Hall's celebrated sermon on "Sentiments proper for the Present Crisis," can, I think, have no doubt that much of the fire and spirit of the latter was derived from the scene he had thuswitnessed:

[1] Robert Hall's works, vol. iv. pp. 48, 49. Harper.

"Enjoy that repose, illustrious immortals. Your mantle fell when you ascended, and thousands, inflamed with your spirit, and impatient to tread in your steps, are ready to swear by Him that sitteth upon the throne, and liveth forever and ever, they will protect freedom in her last asylum, and never desert that cause which you sustained by your labors and cemented with your blood. And Thou, sole Ruler among the children of men, to whom the shields of the earth belong, gird on Thy sword Thou most Mighty; go forth with our hosts in the day of battle," etc.[1]

[1] Vol. i. p. 110.

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